

From the feast of the Dormition of Anne, Mother of the Theotokos

Having kept the precepts of the Law in a manner pleasing to the Lord, you surpassed all mothers in Israel as you gave birth to the unique and ever-Virgin Theotokos, O holy Ann, grandmother of Christ. You passed from earth to the dwelling-place of God, where you rejoice with the just from all ages.

Joachim and Ann, the holy couple, were formerly barren, but they have brought forth the Mother of God, the holy branch from whom has blossomed Christ our God, the salvation of the world. They have passed to the heavenly courts. Together with their daughter, in company with the Angels, they now rejoice and constantly intercede for the world. Joining them in faith, we sing and cry aloud: "Through the Handmaid of God, the all-pure Mary, you are the grandparents of her Son, Jesus Christ: intercede for us!"

Let us sing fittings hymns to Ann, who was well named for grace: for, contrary to all expectations, she gave birth to the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary. She became an ancestor in the flesh to Christ, our Redeemer, who has welcomed her into heaven today, where she intercedes for us and seeks peace for the world.



EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 26, 2020



Feeding of the Five Thousand

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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His name.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

2: Say to God: How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 7, pg. 42)

You destroyed Death by Your cross. You opened paradise to the thief. You changed the weeping of the myrrh-bearers, and commanded Your apostles to proclaim that You, O Christ God, have risen, granting to the world great mercy.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1, pg. 15)

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercessions, save our souls from death.

Kondakion of the Transfiguration (Tone 7)

On the mountain You were transfigured O Christ God, and your disciples saw as much of your glory as they could hold, so that when they would see You crucified they would know that You suffer willingly, and would proclaim to the world that You are verily the splendor of the Father.

The Future: the Messianic Banquet

Earlier in Matthew's Gospel, we see Jesus pointing to the future: "*I say to you that many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven*" (Mt 8:11). He was alluding to the idea of the Messianic Banquet, the great feast that represented for Jews that communion with God, which the coming of the Messiah would bring about.

This feast is described in Isaiah 25:6-9 in terms which make us think of the feeding of the 5000: "*And in this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees. And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of all people He will take away from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken. And it will be said in that day: 'Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him and He will save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'*" The Messiah would come and restore Israel. The scattered Jews of the world would be drawn back to their homeland and they would all sit down to a great meal of celebration. How could the first Jewish believers in Christ not have thought of this banquet when reflecting on the feeding of the 5000?

When Jesus spoke of many "*coming from east and west,*" He was adding a new note to the concept of this banquet: it would be open to Gentiles, and many "*sons of the kingdom*" would be excluded. The kingdom of God – and this, the great feast of the kingdom – would feature Jews and Gentiles eating together (an act forbidden in Jewish tradition). And so in Mt 15:30-38 we find Jesus' miracle repeated, after He heals the Canaanite woman in the area of Tyre and Sidon. But this time it is 4000 Gentiles who were fed. The feeding of these multitudes – Jews and Gentiles – would proclaim to believing Jews that the time of the Messiah had arrived.

In Our Worship

Byzantine worship includes several allusions to the feeding of the multitudes. In the Divine Liturgy it is prescribed that five loaves be used to prepare the oblation. The Lamb is cut from one of them; the others are used to provide the particles representing the Theotokos and the saints and the living and the dead for whom we pray. Once again the Church is fed from five loaves.

Five loaves are also used in the rite of *artoklasia* (breaking of the bread) celebrated on major feasts. The priest prays: "O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who blessed the five loaves in the wilderness and thus sustained 5000 men, bless these loaves, along with this wheat, wine and oil, and multiply them in this holy city and for Your whole world, and sanctify the faithful who partake of them..." Traditionally in some churches, many other loaves would be provided to feed the needy while the people sing, "Rich men have turned poor and gone hungry, but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good thing." Thus the Messianic banquet and the soup kitchen have something in common: both point to the Lord as the ultimate and unfailing Nourisher of all mankind.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +William & Bertha Rahall, Habib & Mary Rahall, deceased members of the Rahall & Reeks families. Requested by Nick Rahall and family.

August 2 +Bertha Peters (40 Day). Requested by the Parish.

August 9 +Montaha Abboudy (40 Day). Requested by the family.

August 16+ James Halal, Mitchell Bollus, Richard Francis, Naphie Samara, Bertha Peters. Requested by Marilyn and Zenon Tencza.

August 23 +Richard Francis, James Halal. Requested by Joe and Lorraine Lian.

REMINDER

The Dormition Fast begins on August 1. This two week fast prepares us for the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15. During this time, meat, meat products, dairy, and fish are traditionally not eaten. The exception is the feast of the Transfiguration when fish is allowed. Remember that fasting is a tool to help us, not a law unto itself. Keep the fast as best you can. Those with health issues, small children and women who are pregnant or nursing may need to modify the fast. Please contact Fr. Bryan if you have any questions. The schedule of services during the fast is printed below.

Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

Wed. 8/5, 7PM - Great Vespers for the feast of the Transfiguration

Thu. 8/6, 7PM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Transfiguration and Blessing of Grapes

Mon. 8/10, 7PM - Paraclisis

Fri. 8/14, 7PM - Great Vespers for the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

Sat. 8/15, 10AM - Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

If you have family news you would like to share with the parish, please contact Fr. Bryan so that he can put it in the bulletin.

Also, if you need help with anything during this uncertain time, please contact Fr. Bryan so that he can assist or put you in contact with parishioners who have volunteered to help.

- ◆ Please continue to pray for all those infected with Covid-19 as well as those who care for them. Let us also remember those who have lost their lives to the virus. Memory eternal!
- ◆ Please remember in your prayers all the members of our parish who are sick or suffering in any way. Please contact Fr. Bryan with the names of those folks whose names you would like to include in the bulletin so that we can all pray for them.
- ◆ Let us also pray for our country and for our public authorities, that that may be strengthened in every good deed.

FINANCIALS

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$ 829
Memorials	\$ 160
Stole Offerings	\$ 20
Total	\$ 1,009

I am very grateful to those of you who have continued to send in your offerings during this time. If you have not done so and are able, please prayerfully consider mailing in your offerings. It takes \$8,000 monthly to operate the parish. At this point, I have not had to access our savings to cover monthly expenses. With your help, we can keep it that way!

God bless your generosity!

The Messianic Banquet

THE MIRACULOUS FEEDING OF 5000 with five loaves and two fish is reported in each of the four Gospels. In both the earliest and latest Gospels, there is an unusual unanimity in the details which they relate: more than most other Gospel narratives, including the resurrection. This reflects the great importance which the first Christians attached to this narrative. In it they saw the Lord Jesus connected to the great movements of God in the past, the present and the future.

The Past: the Exodus from Egypt

As is well known, the Gospel of Matthew was written for Jewish believers who were convinced that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. They also saw many Old Testament events as “types,” pointing to New Testament events which fulfill and surpass the Old in God’s plan for our salvation. The early Church Fathers in the Greek and Latin worlds had the same vision. Thus St Cyril of Alexandria would write, “All that *is* written about the blessed Moses we affirm to be an icon and a type of that salvation that comes in Christ” (*Glaphyra [Illumination] on Exodus*, 1.3).

The feeding of the 5000 was one such event, in which Christ’s actions reflect that He is the New Moses and more: the One who worked through Moses on behalf of the children of Israel. Just as the exodus from Egypt begins with Pharaoh oppressing the Israelites, the Gospel story begins with Herod’s murder of John the Baptist. While Pharaoh oppresses the Israelites because they were so numerous, Herod kills John because of his moral stance.

Hearing about John’s death, Jesus goes apart, to “*a deserted place*” (Mt 14:13). Jesus, His disciples and the people who came to Him from the towns and villages were in a “desert” just as Moses, his soldiers, and the crowds were in Sinai.

When the Israelites were in the desert with Moses, God fed them with manna and quail, which Psalm 78:24 calls “*the bread of heaven*.” While the Galileans were in the wilderness with Jesus, He Himself fed them with bread and fish.

The feeding of the Israelites in Sinai was connected to their passage through the Red Sea “*on dry ground*” (Ex 14:23 et al). The feeding of the 5000 is connected to the miracle of Jesus “*walking on the sea*” (Mt 14:25) which follows immediately. While the Israelites walked on the ground exposed by the parting of the sea, Jesus walks on the sea itself.

The Present: Jesus Nourishes the Church

This event marks the first time in the Gospel that the whole crowd will be invited to eat together with Christ, showing His desire to gather all His followers around a common table with Him. St Hilary of Poitiers noted that the first Church – those who responded to the preaching of Peter – numbered about 5000 men (Acts 4:4). The 5000 fed in the wilderness point to those 5000 who were the first to be nourished by the presence of Christ in His Church.

On that “table” in the wilderness was bread and fish. We recall that, for Christians during the Roman persecutions, the fish was a code-sign for Christ. The letters of the Greek word for fish – *ichthys* – was an anagram for the profession of faith, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.” The bread – which Jesus “*took... blessed...and broke*” (Mt 14:19) – was an “icon” for the early Christians of the Eucharist, in which we receive the Son of God, our Savior, the Bread of life.

Thus the feeding of the 5000 points to the Church and to its communal meal, the Eucharist.

Prokimenon

Reader: The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

People: The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Verse: Give to the Lord, you sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise .

People: The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Reader: The Lord will give strength to his people;

People: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Epistle: 1 Cor 1:10-17

Alleluia Verses

It is good to give thanks to the Lord; to sing praises to your name, O Most High!

Verse: To proclaim your kindness at dawn and your faithfulness throughout the night.

Gospel: Mt 14:14-22 – Feeding of the Five Thousand

Our new Gospel Book arrived from St. Elizabeth’s Convent in Minsk last week. Proceeds from the work done by its various workshops helps St. Elizabeth’s support its *diaconia* or service.

The purchase was made possible though donations made in memory of some of our parishioners who passed away this year. Their family members made donations and asked that they be used for things needed in the church.

There are a number of things we still need. They include: a second icon stand, red & blue altar cloths as well as some smaller items. If you would like to donate any of these items in memory of your loved ones, please contact Fr. Bryan.

