

From the feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

On this day, celebrating the all-holy and glorious Transfiguration of the Lord, let us glorify Christ, who through the fire of His divine splendor, restores our fallen nature and makes it radiant, as before the Fall. (Vespers)

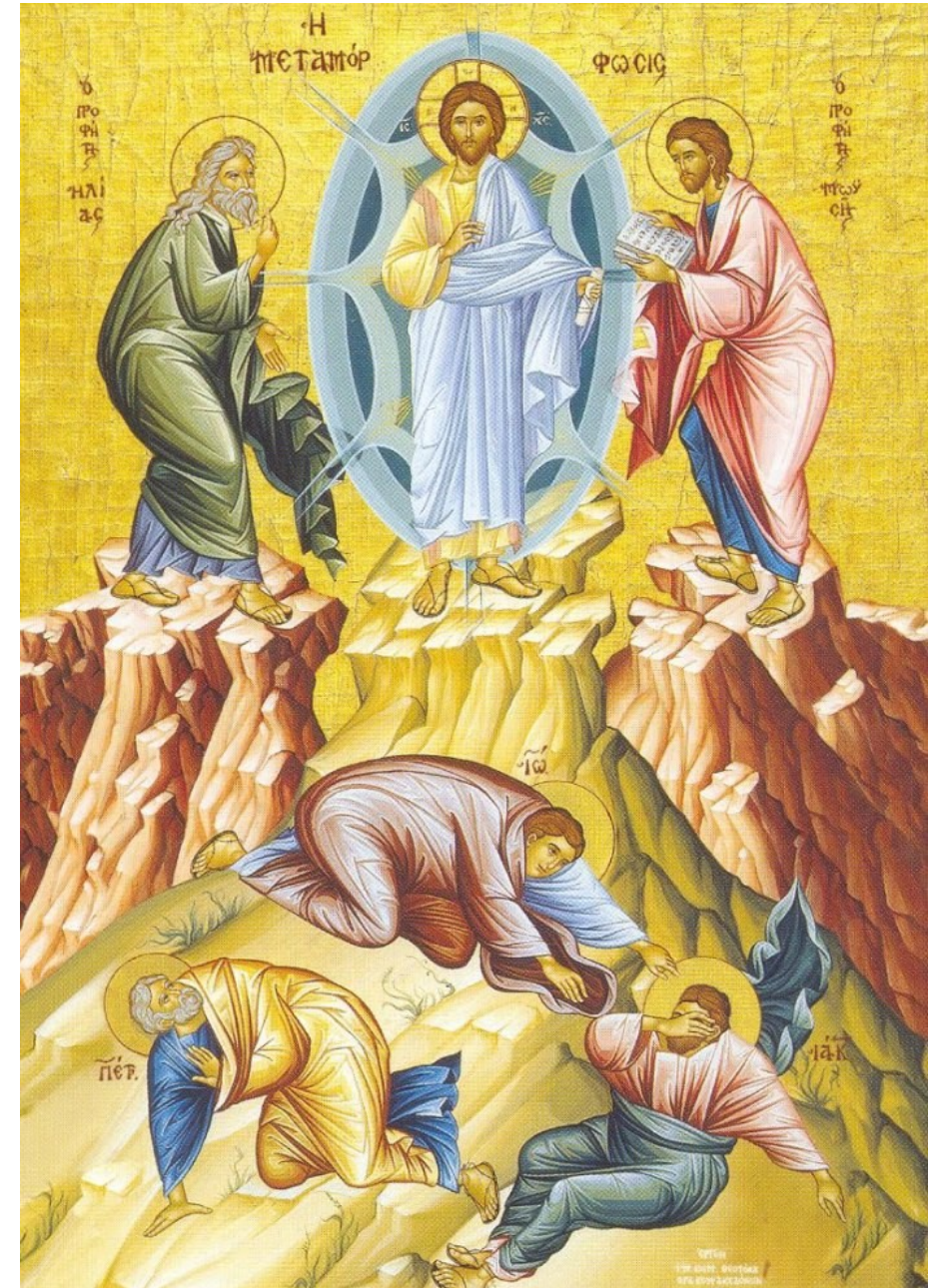
From the Commemoration of the Holy Apostle Matthias

Grant me streams of eloquence, O Lord who gathered together the waters into a single basin. Grant power to my heart, O God of compassion, whose word made firm the dry land. Enlighten the thoughts of my heart, O God who are arrayed with light as with a cloak. Thus may I proclaim and sing: "In Your mercy, You have justly showered honors upon Matthias, wonder-worker and apostle!" (Orthros)



Apostle Matthias

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 9, 2020



TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

Antiphon (Feast)

I: Great is the Lord and wholly to be praised in the city of our God, on His holy mountain.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!

2: You set the mountains in place by Your power, You who are girt with might.

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

3: The Lord is clothed with majesty and glory, robed in light as with a cloak.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us!

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Tabor and Hermon rejoice at Your Name..

People: O Son of God, who were transfigured on Mount Tabor, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1, pg. 38)

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, giving life to the world. Wherefore, the heavenly powers cried out to you, O Giver of life: “Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom! Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!”

Troparion of the Transfiguration (Tone 7)

You were transfigured on the mountain, O Christ God showing your disciples as much of your glory as they could hold. Let your eternal light shine also upon us sinners, through the prayer of the Mother of God, O Giver of light, glory to You.

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.

In the Church, the light experienced by Saul has been identified with the light that shone on Tabor, the Radiant Light of the Father, Jesus Christ. As we sing on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, “Christ, who had been radiant in light on the mountain, blinded your bodily eyes; but He allowed your soul to see the Trinity” (from the canon, ode 1).

The “Uncreated Light” of God

In the Gospels we find two seemingly contradictory understandings of our ability to know God. On the one hand, we are told, “*No one has seen God at any time*” (Jn 1:18). On the other hand we hear, “*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*” (Mt 5:8). In the fourth century St Gregory of Nyssa showed how both statements are true.

He taught that the essence of God was unknowable. Like the sun in the imagery cited above, God in His deepest being is unapproachable. The energies of God – His “Light” and “Warmth” – have been made known to us and we can truly know God in His energies.

In the fourteenth century, St Gregory Palamas applied this teaching to the Transfiguration. He explained that, when the Apostles witnessed the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor, that they were seeing the actual uncreated light of God.

Reflecting the Divine Light

We too, Palamas insisted, can experience God’s divine energies even though we can never know His essence: “for those who love each other, all nature is filled with the light which seems to radiate from the other.” Many saints who have loved deeply have reflected this light. Perhaps the first was the Protomartyr St Stephen, who witnessed to Christ before the council of Jewish elders in Jerusalem, “*And looking steadfastly on Stephen, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel*” (Acts 6:15).

St Simeon the New Theologian, writing in the eleventh century, described his own experience in similar words: “He gives Himself totally to me, unworthy as I am, and I am filled with His love and beauty. I am sated with pleasure and divine tenderness. I share in the Light. I participate also in the glory. My face shines like that of my beloved, and all my members become bearers of Light.”

The most compelling witness to such an experience comes from Nicholas Motovilov. In 1831 he wrote of seeing St Seraphim of Sarov transfigured with the divine light. They had been discussing how a person can acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit, but Motovilov was puzzled: “I do not understand how I can be certain that I am in the Spirit of God. Finally, as he described it, “Father Seraphim took me very firmly by the shoulders and said, ‘We are both in the Spirit of God now, my son. Why don’t you look at me?’” I replied, ‘I cannot look, Father, because your eyes are flashing like lightning. Your face has become brighter than the sun, and my eyes ache with pain.’

“Father Seraphim said, ‘Don’t be alarmed, Your Godliness! Now you yourself have become as bright as I am. You are now in the fullness of the Spirit of God yourself; otherwise, you would not be able to see me as I am.’

“Then, bending his head toward me, he whispered softly in my ear: ‘Thank the Lord God for His unutterable mercy to us. You saw that I did not even cross myself; only in my heart did I pray mentally to the Lord God and said within myself, ‘Lord, grant him to see clearly with his bodily eyes that descent of Your Spirit which You grant to Your servants when you are pleased to appear in the light of Your magnificent glory.’ And you see, my son, the Lord instantly fulfilled the humble prayer of poor Seraphim. How, then, shall we not thank Him for this unspeakable gift to us both!’”

For a moment the Apostles on Tabor saw the light of God which is Christ’s by nature. Likewise, for a moment Nicholas Motovilov saw the light of God indwelling by grace in the person who is in Christ.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +**Montaha Abboudy (40 Day)**. Requested by the family.

August 16 Health and well-being of Fred Yanni. Requested by Antoinette Arraj & Family.

+ **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.

Feast Day Liturgical Schedule

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

Our new Gospel Book arrived from St. Elizabeth's Convent in Minsk recently. 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.



Financials

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$2,251
Candles	\$ 11
Stole	\$ 75
TOTAL	\$2,337

Thanks to everyone who has continued to send in their contributions on a regular basis. As a reminder, it costs approximately **\$8,000** monthly to maintain the parish. Your continued generosity has made it possible to pay our operating costs without dipping into savings.

May God continue to bless you for your generosity to your parish!

Please read the message below from Bishop Nicholas

The disastrous explosion in Beirut has created severe destruction to all of Beirut. So far, over 100 people have perished and possibly over 300,000 are homeless; no neighborhood is without destruction. Most of our Churches in Beirut have suffered great losses. I spoke with Metropolitan Archbishop George Bacouny this morning and offered him our prayers and support. We are immediately wiring \$10,000 from the Eparchy to help the people with food and medical supplies.

I am asking each parish to forward to the Eparchy generous gifts from the parish charitable funds, and also to announce on Sunday, and every week thereafter, that we have an open account for individual donations from parishioners.

We need to care for our brothers and sisters during this new crisis added to the Covid crisis. Please be generous. Send the parish gift as soon as possible to our CFO office and all future gifts from parishioners as soon as they are received, as the economic situation is so severe and our loving support is needed. All checks should be payable to the Diocese of Newton.

From Fr. Bryan: We will be sending a gift this week to help our brothers and sisters in Beirut. If you would like to make a personal gift, please contact me.



Seeing the Light of God

“I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” (Jn 8:12). These familiar words of the Lord Jesus reflect one of the most popular images in the Scriptures, but what do they mean? How is Jesus the Light of the world?

The rest of this verse sheds light on what is meant here. “*I am the Light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.*” Here and in a number of other places, Jesus is portrayed as **a Beacon**: one who guides along a right path, who illumines the way for us. He is the “Giver of light,” the One bringing light to our hearts. To say that He is light in this way is to talk about what he does.

But there is another way to see Christ as light. He is light, not only because of what He does for us, but because of what He is. “*God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all*” (1 Jn 1:5). God is not described here as light illumining our minds or hearts, but **as He is in Himself**: Light in His innermost being.

Based on the Gospel message, the Church proclaims the Lord Jesus as “Light from Light” (Nicene Creed), the “Joyful Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, the Heavenly, the Holy, the Blessed: Jesus Christ” (third-century Vespers hymn). As God is Light in Himself, so too the incarnate Christ is the Light of the Father. “*I and the Father are one*” (Jn 10:30).

As far back as the third century, the Fathers used our experience of the sun to illustrate this mystery. Like others before him, St Cyril, the ninth-century teacher of the Slavs, reflected, “Do you see in the heavens the brilliant sphere of the sun and how light is begotten and warmth proceeds from it? God the Father is like the sphere of the sun, without beginning or end. From Him is eternally begotten God the Son, like light from the sun; and just as there comes warmth together with light, the Holy Spirit proceeds. Each one is distinguished separately: the sphere of the sun, the light and the warmth – these are not three suns, but one sun in the heavens. So also, in the Holy Trinity: there are three Persons, but God is one and indivisible.”

The Light of Mt. Tabor

Christ was concretely manifested as light at His Transfiguration. “*His face shone like the sun and His clothes became as white as light*” (Mt 17:2) – “*white and glistening*” (Lk 9:29), “*such as no launderer on earth can whiten them*” (Mk 9:3). For a moment, His disciples glimpsed what had been hidden since the Incarnation: the Word of God, radiant with divine glory, in the person of Jesus.

In icons of the Transfiguration, this radiance is depicted by a geometric figure behind the representation of the Lord, called a **mandorla**. While depictions of Christ during His earthly ministry show His head surrounded by a cross and a halo, icons representing Him in moments beyond time and space (e.g. the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Dormition) envelop His whole body in this light of glory.

This same figure is found in icons of the conversion of St Paul. Christ, the “radiant Light” was manifested to Saul of Tarsus (St Paul) on the road to Damascus as “*a light from the sky brighter than the sun*” (Acts 26:13). While this light briefly blinded Saul by its brilliance, it ultimately enabled him to see even more clearly “*the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed*” (Col 1:26).

In the Church, the light experienced by Saul has been identified with the light that shone on Tabor, the Radiant Light of the Father, Jesus Christ. As we sing on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, “Christ, who had been radiant in light on the mountain, blinded your bodily eyes; but He allowed your soul to see the Trinity” (from the canon, ode 1).

Prokimenon

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

People: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

Verse: Exult, you just, in the Lord; praise from the upright is fitting.

People: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in you.

Reader: May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us,

People: For we have hoped in you.

Epistle: 1 Cor 4:9-16

Alleluia Verses

O God, you granted me retribution and made peoples subject to me and saved me from my raging enemies.

Verse: Therefore, I will proclaim you, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing praise to your name.

Gospel: Mt 17:14-23

Special Petitions for the Ecumenic Prayer (Inserted after the third petition)

- For all your people who have proven positive with the coronavirus, that they may be restored to full health and offer you their praise and thanksgiving, we pray to you, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all those who have died as a result of the corona virus that he may be granted rest with the Saints and the mercy of God in the Heavenly Kingdom, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For doctors, nurses, and all in health care, risking their lives to minister to those afflicted with the coronavirus, that they remain safe, and in good health as they serve others, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all your people in Lebanon who were hurt during the disastrous explosion, that they may be restored to full health, and for those who died that they may be granted rest among the Saints, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For peace throughout the Middle East, especially in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, we pay to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.

Hirmos (Transfiguration)

You gave birth without stain, for it was God incarnate in the flesh who came forth from your womb. He was seen on earth and conversed with men. Wherefore, O Mother of God, we all exalt you.

Kinonikon- Praise the Lord from the heavens...

After Communion - Troparion of the Transfiguration