

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
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*From a homily
by St. Nikolai of
Ochrid
d. 1956*

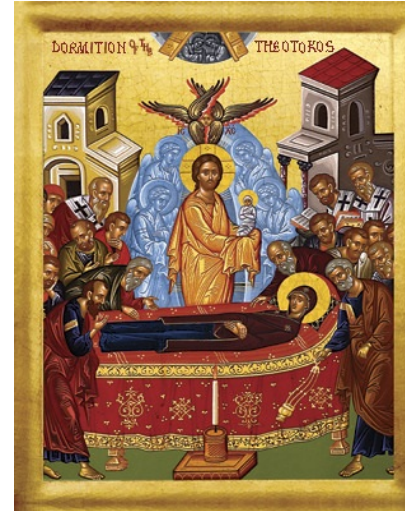
My soul doth magnify
the Lord [Luke 1:46].
We have, my brethren,
only a few of the words spoken
by the most holy Mother of God
recorded in the Gospels, and

they are all about God's majesty. She was silent before men, but her soul conversed unceasingly with God. Every day and every hour, she found a new reason and inducement to glorify God. If it were possible to know and record all her glorifying of God in the course of her life, what a vast book that would make! But, even from this one ascription of praise that she spoke in the presence of her kinswoman Elisabeth, the mother of John the great prophet and forerunner, every single Christian can evaluate what a fragrant and godly flower was her most pure soul.

This is but one wonderful canticle from the soul of the Mother of God that has come down to us through the

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Gospel. This knowledge came to her from the Holy Spirit of God, whose grace constantly poured upon her like clear water into a pure vessel. Her soul magnified God in psalms throughout the whole of her life, and therefore God raised her up above the cherubim and seraphim. And we, small and sinful beings that we are will be magnified by the same Lord who magnified her in His Kingdom, if we exert ourselves to fill this brief life with the

magnification of God in our words, acts, thoughts and prayers.

Omost holy, most pure and most blessed Mother of God, extend thy wings of prayer over us. To thee and thy Son, our God, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

St. Maximus the Confessor

Feast Day ~ August 13

Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan in 313 made it possible for Christianity to exist as a legal religion in the Roman Empire and, although there continued to be sporadic outbursts of persecution in some places, the age of martyrdom was essentially ended. Thereafter, if martyrdom occurred, it was usually that of a missionary saint who was killed in his efforts at conversion of a pagan people.

But then another kind of persecution began which, in its ugliness, pitted Christian against Christian. The great

Christological questions of the first several centuries following the Resurrection were not all resolved at the Council of Nicaea in 325. There continued to be questioning and speculating, controversy and argument about the person of Christ and how the Church should respond to the world. Heresies grew out of independent opinions not accepted by the Church as a whole.

Just as the earlier controversy over whether Christ had one or two natures, one of the most fiercely fought controversies in the 7th century was the question of whether Christ had one (divine) will or two (one human, one divine). The greatest defender of the Orthodox teaching on the two wills of Christ was St. Maximus, an abbot who is known to us as “the Confessor”.

Born in the year 580 into a prominent family, Maximus entered public service as an adult, eventually becoming chief secretary to the Emperor Heraclius. The young man had long wished for a quieter, more contemplative life, so when it became apparent that the Emperor was leaning toward accepting the theories of the Monothelites, Maximus resigned his position and took refuge in a monastery near Constantinople.

But the quiet, contemplative life eluded him as invasions by Avars, Slavs and Persians destroyed the peace. Even though he had been elected Abbot of the monastery, Maximus escaped to Alexandria in 626. Now, as the heresy of Monotheletism gained momentum and both Emperor (now Constans II) and Patriarch of Constantinople Pyrrhos accepted it, Maximus became outspoken in his defense of Orthodox teaching.



In their work *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, George Berthold and Jaroslav Pelikan explain that Maximus knew that “whatever was not assumed in the Incarnation was not healed in the Redemption; the absence of a truly human will in Jesus Christ would have meant that (of all the functions of human nature and personality to be exempted!) the human will of sinful humanity would not have been saved.”

Through his writings and preaching, Maximus attempted to convey the truth. He was able to influence two local councils, one in Carthage in 645 and another in Rome in 649, where the teachings of the Church held firm. But public and political opinion in Constantinople held sway and in 653, Maximus, along with Pope Martin I of Rome, was arrested and brought to trial for treason (the proceedings of this trial were recorded by a scribe and can still be read today). Both the abbot and the pope were banished in 655 to different remote parts of the Empire; Pope Martin died within a few months of his exile.

But Emperor Constans did not give up on Maximus. He continued to urge his acquiescence to this heresy and the abbot continued to refuse. Maximus was recalled to Constantinople in 661 and, after further interrogation, he was sentenced to mutilation. The tongue of the holy man of God who had spoken truthfully about the second person of the Trinity was cut out, and the right hand which had written about the love and knowledge of God was cut off. Having become a “Confessor” for the faith by virtue of his teachings and his sufferings for Christ, St. Maximus fell asleep in the Lord on August 13, 662. The heresy of Monotheletism was finally condemned at the 6th Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 680-681.

We live again in an age when the nuances of Christian theology are being twisted, when basic Christian beliefs are being either diluted or ignored, when Truth must be defended. May St.

Maximus the Confessor intercede for us that we may have the wisdom and strength to be defenders of the Faith.

References: Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings, translation, notes and introduction by George Berthold and Jaroslav Pelikan; Orthodox Saints, Volume One by George Poulos; Prologue from Ochrid by (St.) Nikolai Velimirovic; internet article from OrthodoxWiki.

Parish News



Summer is the time for vacations (remember to speak with Fr. Nicholas about the nearest Orthodox church if you are going to a new vacation destination), but also for church conferences. Our Eastern Region Parish Life Conference, which will be held at Antiochian Village is June 29-July 3. In what has now become a tradition, the Western Rite parishes will offer Vespers according to the Western rite on Friday, July 1, the Eve of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Kh. Becky will represent

St. Gregory's at the Sacred Music Institute July 13-16 and will make several presentations on music for our services. Fr. Nicholas and Fr. Raphael will attend the Clergy Symposium July 18-22 where Fr. Nicholas will make a presentation on ministry to the dying. St. Patrick's Church in Bealton will host the Western Rite Conference this year August 9-12. Please see Fr. Nicholas if you would like to attend any of the events at this conference.

We will celebrate the Transfiguration of Our Lord on Saturday, August 6, with Mass at 10AM, preceded by Matins at 9:30, and our annual parish picnic will follow. We will have a luncheon cookout and games will be provided for outdoors and inside.

According to Archdiocesan directives, major feasts which fall on Mondays may be observed on the previous day, so we will celebrate the the Dormition (Assumption) of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Sunday, August 14 with services at the usual time.

At the Name of Jesus



Names figure prominently in the Bible. The name given to a baby or a new name given at some important juncture in life are told to us as something that matters: God changed Jacob's name to Israel and made him the father of a great nation of people and his sons the heads of the twelve tribes of that nation. Elizabeth and Zachariah broke with tradition and astonished their family and friends by naming their son "John" as commanded by an angel. Our Lord changed his disciple Simon's name to Peter, the "rock" upon which the faith of the Church would be founded.

We continue to place great emphasis on names today. Some people take the name of a favorite saint at their Chrismations and more often, priests and bishops take new names at their ordinations and consecrations. Most couples carefully go through books of names and family names in order to choose just the right name for a new baby.

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Address Correction Requested

In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter declares that “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” [Acts 4:12] than the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, and in his letter to the Philippians, St. Paul says that God has given Jesus the name that “is above every name” [Phil. 2:9]. We utter the name of Jesus numerous times as we pray the Jesus Prayer and we bow our heads at this name. In the Magnificat antiphons before Christmas, we expand upon this name with additional appellations from the Old Testament prophecies: Wisdom, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Emmanuel; and in the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, we sing of further titles: King of glory, Good Shepherd, Strength of Martyrs. What has become, in our fallen sinful world, a word spat out in anger is for the Christian the precious name of our Savior Jesus Christ.

At St. Gregory’s, we will celebrate a feast in honor of the Holy Name of Jesus on August 7. While the feast of the Circumcision on January 1 commemorates the naming of the child Jesus as well as his obedience to the Old Law and his first shedding of blood for the salvation of mankind, another feast day (with appropriate prayers, readings, chants and hymns for the Mass and the Office) was composed in the late fifteenth century by Bernardine dei Busti. The feast was first celebrated in Germany, Scotland, England, Spain and Belgium and, through monastic use among several orders, it eventually spread through the remainder of Europe. The feast day’s position in the liturgical calendar has at various times and places been, in addition to August 7 (the English and Scottish date), on January 8, 14, 15, 31 or the Second Sunday After Epiphany (as currently in Roman Catholic churches).

May we always keep the holy Name of Jesus on our lips and in our hearts, remembering with St. Paul “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. [Phil. 2:10, 11]

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2016</h1>					1 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	2 Visitation of the BVM; of the Oct. of Ss. Peter & Paul; St. John Maximovitch, BC, 1966 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
3 Sunday in the Oct. of Corpus Christi; comm. Fourth Sun. after Pentecost; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>W</i>	4 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul <i>(Independence Day)</i>	5 of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	6 Octave Day of Ss. Peter & Paul	7 Ss. Cyril & Methodius (B), CC, 9th c.	8 St. Kilian of Wurzburg, BM, 689	9 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
10 Third Sunday after Pentecost; VII Holy Brothers, Mm, c. 165; St. Joseph of Damascus, 1860 <i>G</i>	11 Solemnity of St. Benedict, Ab, c. 540; St. Pius I, PM, c. 154	12 Ss. Nabor & Felix, Mm, 303	13 St. Anacletus, PM, 1st c.	14	15 St. Vladimir of Kiev, KC, 1015; St. Henry, C, 1024	16 Our Lady of Einsiedeln <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
17 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Alexis, C, 5th c. <i>G</i>	18 St. Sergius, Ab, 1392; Ss. Symphorosa & her Seven Sons, Mm, c. 138	19 St. Seraphim of Sarov, PrC, 1833	20 St. Elias the Prophet, 9th c. BC; St. Margaret of Antioch, VM, 304	21 St. Praxedes of Rome, V, 2nd c.	22 St. Mary Magdalene, Penitent, 1st c.	23 St. John Cassian, Ab, 433; St. Appollinaris, BM, 1st c.; St. Liborius, BC, 397 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
24 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Christina, VM; Ss. Romanus & David, Mm, 1015 <i>G</i>	25 St. James the Greater, Apostle, 44; St. Christopher, C, 251	26 St. Anne, Mother of the BVM, 1st c.; St. Jacob Netsvetov, C, 1864	27 St. Panteleimon, c. 305	28 Ss. Nazarius, Celsus Mm, Ss. Victor, PM & Innocent PC, 5th c	29 St. Martha of Bethany, V, 1st c.	30 Ss. Abdon & Sennen, Mm, c. 303 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
31 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Germanus of Auxerre, BC, 448 <i>G</i>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>

Confessions may be made during the Psalms at Matins, following Vespers, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Sunday Liturgy. Christian Education for all is offered during Coffee Hour.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>August 2016</h1>					<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>	
	1 St. Peter's Chains; Holy Maccabees, Mm, c. 160 BC; St. Ethelwold, BC, 984	2 St. Stephen I, PM, 257	3 Finding of St. Ste- phen the Proto- martyr, 415; St. Nicodemus, M, 1 st . c.	4	5 Our Lady of the Snows (435); St. Oswald, KM, 642	6 Transfiguration of Our Lord; Ss. Six- tus II PM, Felicissi- mus, 285 <i>Mass at 10am</i> W <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
7 Holy Name Day; comm. Seventh Sunday after Pente- cost; St. Donatus of Arezzo, BM, 362 W	8 Ss. Cyriacus, Largus & Smaragdus, Mm, 304	9 St. Romanus, M, 258	10 St. Laurence, Deacon M, 258	11 Ss. Tiburtius & Susanna, Mm, 3 rd c.; St. Philomena, VM, c. 304	12	13 St. Maximus the Confessor, CD, 662; Ss. Hippolytus & comp., Mm, 235 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
14 Assumption of the BVM (tr.); comm. Eighth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Eusebius, PrC, c. 300 W	15 (Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary)	16 St. Joachim, Father of the BVM, C, 1 st c; of the Octave of the Assumption	17 of the Octave of the Assumption	18 of the Octave of the Assump- tion; St. Helena, 330; St. Agapitus, M, 272	19 of the Oct. of the Assump- tion	20 of the Octave of the Assump-tion <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
21 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost; of the Octave of the Assumption G	22 Octave Day Assumption; Ss. Timothy, M, Hippolytus, BM & Symphorian, M, 3 rd c.	23 Vigil of St. Bartholomew	24 St. Bartho- lomew, Apostle, 1st c.	25 St. Hilda, V, 680	26 St. Zephyrinus, PM, 219	27 St. Caesarius of Arles, BC, 542 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
28 Tenth Sunday after Pente- cost; St. Augustine of Hippo, BCD, 430; St. Moses the Black, C, 405 G	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist; St. Sabina, M, c. 125	30 Ss. Felix & Adauctus, Mm, 304; St. Fiacre the Hermit, C, 670	31 St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, BC, 651			

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at Matins, following Vespers, and by appointment.*

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