

# ✠ 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. John of Damascus*

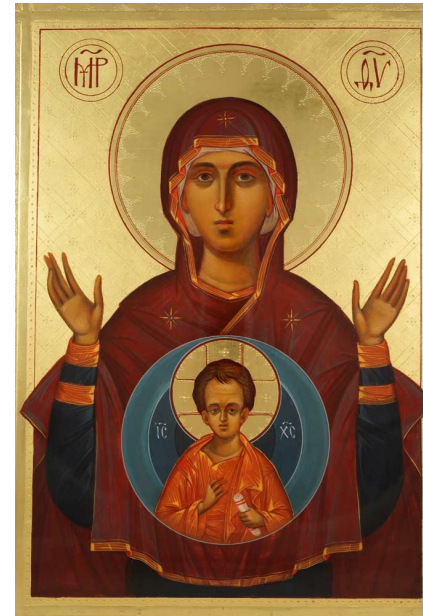
*d. 760*

**T**his day the Ark of the living God, even the holy and living Ark, wherein once its own Maker had been held, is borne to its resting place in that Temple of the Lord which is not made with hands. Her ancestor David leapeth before it. And in company with him the Angels dance, the Archangels sing aloud, the Virtues ascribe glory, the Principalities

shout for joy, the Powers make merry, the Dominions rejoice, the Thrones keep holiday, the Cherubim utter praise, and the Seraphim proclaim its glory. This day the Eden of the new Adam receiveth her who was the living garden of delight, wherein the condemnation was annulled, wherein the Tree of Life was planted, wherein our nakedness was covered.

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**T**his day the spotless Virgin, who had been defiled by no earthly lust, but rather was enobled by heavenly desires, died only to live without returning to dust. For being herself a living heaven, she took her place today among the heavenly mansions. From her the true Life had flowed for all men, and how should she taste of death? But she yielded obedience to the law established by him to whom she had given birth, and, as the daughter of the old Adam, underwent the old sentence, which even her Son, who is the very Life itself, had not refused. But, as the Mother of the living God, she was worthily taken by him unto himself.

**E**ve, who had said Yes to the proposals of the serpent, was condemned to the pains of travail and the punishment of death, and found her place in the shades of the netherworld. But this truly blessed being had inclined her ears to the Word of God. Her womb had been filled by the action of the Holy Ghost. As soon as she heard the salutation of the archangel, she conceived. And the Son of God thus was made Man in her womb, without any physical union or delectation, but solely by the Spirit. And she brought forth her Offspring without the pangs of travail. So was she altogether consecrate unto service of God. How was death ever to feed upon such an one as this? How was the grave ever to eat her up? How was corruption to break into that body into which Life had been welcomed? For her there was a straight, smooth, and easy way to heaven. For if Christ, who is the Life and the Truth, hath said: *Where I am, there shall also my servant be*, how much more shall not rather his Mother be with him?

# *Saints Julitta and Cyricus, Martyrs*

## *Feast Day ~ July 15*

The term “saint” is used in the Old Testament to refer collectively to the Jews who had been set apart by God and had been faithful to their covenant with God: *All my delight is upon the saints that are in the earth, and upon such as excel in virtue.* [Ps. 16:3]. In the New Testament, the term is also used collectively for those communities that had accepted Christ: *To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...* [1 Cor. 1:2]. As Christians began to suffer persecution under Nero in 64AD and later Emperors, particularly Diocletian in 303, the martyrs who had died refusing to denounce their Christian faith were given the name saint individually. Their witness of faithfulness and courage was held up for veneration and their prayers were sought for those still in the field of battle.

The stories of these martyr saints reveal the most horrendous forms of torture that man has devised against his fellow man. One of the most heartrending stories is of a mother and child who were killed by the governor of Tarsus, Alexander, in the year 304.

Julitta was a young widow, raising her 3-year-old son alone. Living in the city of Iconium with some social standing and considerable wealth, Julitta saw the persecutions around her and fled the city, taking with her two servant girls but leaving behind her worldly possessions and standing. Arriving in Tarsus, she was very quickly identified as a Christian and arrested.

Julitta was subjected to fierce torture and, through it all, continued to proclaim herself a Christian who would never offer sacrifice to idols. Seeing it all from a short distance, the child Cyricus began to wail and cry out for his mother. He said, “I want my mother; I am a Christian, too!” In an attempt to quiet the boy, Alexander picked him up and placed him on his knee. But instead



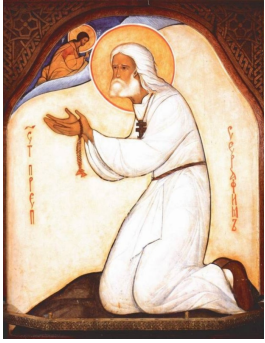
of quieting him, this made the boy even more desperate to help his mother and he began to kick the governor and scratch his face. In anger, Alexander grabbed Cyricus by the arm and flung him down a flight of stone steps. The boy’s head hit the stone and the impact killed him instantly. Julitta mourned her son’s death but was comforted by the knowledge that he would soon be in the arms of his Savior. Shortly afterward, she followed him in death by decapitation. The bodies of mother and child were later retrieved by the two servant girls and buried nearby.

When Constantine I became Emperor and gave protection for Christians, the relics of St. Julitta and St. Cyricus were uncovered and placed in a monastery dedicated to the honor of the martyrs near Constantinople, and a church was built in their honor outside Jerusalem.

The story of these two saints spread around the world quickly. They were soon revered and had churches dedicated to them in Italy, England and Wales, Georgia, Croatia, the Middle East, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and India. Their relics are dispersed among numerous monasteries on Mt. Athos.

We pray to God that we will never have to suffer torture and martyrdom like this mother and child and so many others, but we know that there are numerous Christians suffering in just this way in many parts of the world today. May St. Julitta and St. Cyricus pray for these new martyrs and intercede for us. *Holy Julitta and Cyricus, pray for us.*

## *On Silence and Solitude* by Fr. John Breck



In the New Testament little is said of silence as such. The examples that do exist, however, are striking and significant. The people are reduced to awe-filled silence as they witness Christ's ability to silence his adversaries (Lk. 20:26). Jesus, in the presence of His disciples, displays the authority to still the waters and silence the thundering of the waves as a great storm threatens to swamp their boat. He rebukes the wind and the sea:

*Peace! Be still!* And, St. Mark continues, *the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.* [Mk. 4:39]

Whether on the open sea or in the human heart, peace requires stillness. In the midst of our own storms and turmoil, Jesus speaks these same words, *Peace! Be still!* For those who have ears to hear, who can listen to this commandment and receive it as an invitation, the wind of noise, confusion and tumult ceases, and there comes a great calm...

God speaks out of the depths of His own silence, first to create the world, then to renew the world through the incarnation of His Son. Through the voice of the prophets, including the prophet John of the Book of Revelation, God calls us to silence as well. He invites us to go into our "room", our chosen sacred space, and there to shut the door and pray to our Father who is in secret, assured that our Father who is in secret will answer our prayer (Mt. 6:6). In that silence we contemplate the mystery of God's creative and saving work, together with the promise of our eternal salvation. It is in that silence that we can listen to God, hear His voice, [and] discern His will and purpose for our life...

An excerpt reprinted from *Longing for God: Orthodox Reflections on Bible, Ethics, and Liturgy*, published by St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006

## *From the Holy Assumption Monastery Newsletter*

Dear Friends,

Somewhere along the line, I got on a "Word of the Day" email list (What can I say? I'm a word junkie!). The other day, the word was *weltschmerz*:

*1. Mental depression or apathy caused by comparison of the actual state of the world with an ideal state. 2. A mood of sentimental sadness.*

I don't know many people who fit the first definition exactly, but I do know quite a few who are discouraged by the state of our world and are pining for a version - rightly or wrongly - that they believe would be better.

The good news is that an ideal world does exist. It is the Kingdom of Heaven: eternal, unshakeable, and already touching our broken, mortal world in the here and now.

The harder news is that the Kingdom doesn't magically erase the brokenness of our culture or anyone else's. Until Christ returns in glory, we will continue to live in the tension between the two kingdoms.

But this isn't bad news. Christ has already won the victory over the prince of this world; we are simply in the mopping-up phase - difficult, yes, but with a definite end.

So the question isn't "How do we fix our broken culture?" but "How do we fight for our true King?" For a few people, that may involve politics. For most of us, it looks like what the Kingdom has always looked like: loving God and loving our neighbor.

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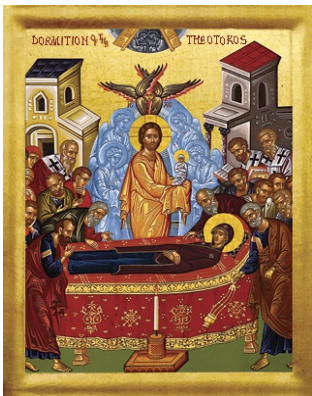
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If you're not sure what that means for you right now, talk to your confessor or to a wise older person. They may not hand you a full war plan, but they can help you fight the battle that's in front of you today. And as you keep fighting your part of the battle, you'll find the kingdom of Heaven establishing an ever-stronger beachhead right where you live.

With love in Christ,  
Mother Melania & the sisters.

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## *Parish News*



As the summer months of July and August begin, with many traveling far and wide for vacations and visits to family (and camp at Antiochian Village), please remember to plan your trips to include a visit to an Orthodox Church for Sunday services. Fr. Nicholas can recommend Antiochian parishes; and remember to contact the priest ahead of time to let him know that you are Orthodox before receiving communion.

There are two major holy days in the month of August: The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord (August 6) and the Dormition (Assumption) of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15). The first will be celebrated on the eve, August 5, with Vespers at 6:30PM, Mass at 7, and a pot-luck supper following. The Dormition will be celebrated on Saturday, August 15, with Matins at 9:30AM, Mass at 10, and a pot-luck brunch following. Saturday Vespers at 6PM will continue throughout the summer.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2026</h1>						<i>Sunday services: Matins at 9am Sung Mass at 9:30</i>
			<b>1</b> of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	<b>2</b> Visitation of the BVM; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul; St. John Maxi- movitch, BC, 1966	<b>3</b> of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul	<b>4</b> St. Andrew of Crete, BC, 740; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>5</b> Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; of the Octave of Ss. Peter & Paul  <b>G</b>	<b>6</b> Octave Day of Ss. Peter & Paul	<b>7</b> Ss. Cyril & Methodius (B), Cc, 869 & 885; St. Palladius, BC, c. 450	<b>8</b> St. Kilian of Wurzburg, BM, 689	<b>9</b> St. Pancratius, BM, c. 304	<b>10</b> St. Joseph of Damascus & comp., Mm, 1860; Seven Holy Brothers, Mm, c. 165	<b>11</b> Solemnity of St. Benedict, Ab, c. 540; St. Pius I, PM, c. 154; St. Sophrony of Essex, Ab, 1993  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>12</b> Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; Ss. Nabor & Felix, Mm, 303  <b>G</b>	<b>13</b> St. Anacletus, PM, 1st C	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> St. Vladimir of Kiev, KC, 1015	<b>16</b> Ss. Nicholas (1917) and Habib (1948) Khasha, Mm	<b>17</b> St. Alexius, C, 5 <sup>th</sup> C	<b>18</b> St. Sergius, Ab, 1392; Translation of the Relics of St. Raphael, 2024  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>19</b> Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; St. Seraphim of Sarov, PrC, 1833  <b>G</b>	<b>20</b> St. Elias the Prophet, 9 <sup>th</sup> C, BC; St. Margaret of Antioch, VM, 304	<b>21</b> St. Praxedes of Rome, V, 2 <sup>nd</sup> C; Ss. Simeon & John, Cc, 6 <sup>th</sup> C.	<b>22</b> St. Mary Magdalene, Penitent, 1 <sup>st</sup> C	<b>23</b> St. John Cassian, Ab, 433; St. Appollinaris, BM, 1 <sup>st</sup> C	<b>24</b> St. Christina, VM, 3 <sup>rd</sup> C; Ss. Romanus & David, Mm, 1015	<b>25</b> St. James the Greater, Apostle, 44; St. Christopher, C, 251  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>26</b> Eighth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Anne, Mother of the BVM, 1 <sup>st</sup> C; St. Jacob Netsvetov, C, 1864  <b>G</b>	<b>27</b> St. Panteleimon, c. 305	<b>28</b> Ss. Nazarius, Celsus, Mm, Ss. Victor, PM & Innocent PC, 5 <sup>th</sup> C	<b>29</b> St. Martha of Bethany, V, 1 <sup>st</sup> C	<b>30</b> Ss. Abdon & Sennen, Mm, c. 303	<b>31</b> St. Germanus of Auxerre, BC, 448	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>August 2026</h1>						<p><b>1</b> St. Peter's Chains; Holy Maccabees, Mm, c. 160 B.C.</p> <p><i>Vespers at 6pm</i></p>
<p><b>2</b> 9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; St. Stephen I, PM, 257</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>G</i></p>	<p><b>3</b> Finding of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, 415; St. Nicodemus, M, 1<sup>st</sup>. C</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> Our Lady of the Snows, 435; St. Oswald, KM, 642</p> <p><i>Mass at 7pm</i>     <i>W</i></p>	<p><b>6</b> Transfiguration of Our Lord; Ss. Sixtus II PM &amp; Felicissimus, 285</p>	<p><b>7</b> Holy Name Day; St. Donatus of Arezzo, BM, 362</p>	<p><b>8</b> Ss. Cyriacus, Largus &amp; Smaragdus, Mm, 304</p> <p><i>Vespers at 6pm</i></p>
<p><b>9</b> 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; St. Romanus, M, 258</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>G</i></p>	<p><b>10</b> St. Laurence, Deacon M, 258</p>	<p><b>11</b> Ss. Tibertius &amp; Susanna, Mm, 3<sup>rd</sup> C; St. Philomena, VM, c. 304</p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>13</b> St. Maximus the Confessor, CD, 662; Ss. Hippolytus &amp; comp., Mm, 235</p>	<p><b>14</b> Vigil of the Assumption; St. Eusebius, PrC, c. 300</p>	<p><b>15</b> Assumption of the BVM</p> <p><i>Mass at 10am</i>     <i>W</i></p> <p><i>Vespers at 6pm</i></p>
<p><b>16</b> 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; St. Joachim, Father of the BVM, C, 1<sup>st</sup> C; of the Oct. of the Assumption     <i>G</i></p>	<p><b>17</b> of the Octave of the Assumption</p>	<p><b>18</b> of the Oct. of the Assumption; St. Helena, Ma, 330</p>	<p><b>19</b> of the Octave of the Assumption</p>	<p><b>20</b> of the Octave of the Assumption</p>	<p><b>21</b> of the Octave of the Assumption</p>	<p><b>22</b> Oct. Day of the Assumption; Ss. Timothy, M, 311 &amp; Hippolytus, BM, c. 225</p> <p><i>Vespers at 6pm</i></p>
<p><b>23</b> 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>G</i></p>	<p><b>24</b> St. Bartholomew the Apostle, 1<sup>st</sup> C</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b> St. Zephyrinus, PM, 219</p>	<p><b>27</b> St. Caesarius of Arles, BC, 542</p>	<p><b>28</b> St. Augustine of Hippo, BCD, 430; St. Moses the Black, C, 405</p>	<p><b>29</b> Beheading of St. John the Baptist; St. Sabina, M, c. 125</p> <p><i>Vespers at 6pm</i></p>
<p><b>30</b> 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost; Ss. Felix &amp; Adauctus, Mm, 304; St. Fiacre the Hermit, C, 670</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>G</i></p>	<p><b>31</b> St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, BC, 651</p>					<p><i>Sunday services:</i> <i>Matins at 9am</i> <i>Sung Mass at 9:30</i></p>