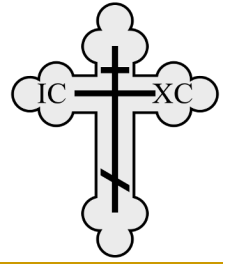




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH AUGUST 2019

Why Mary Has Always Been Honored (edited)-Fr. Stephen Freeman

Wednesday (August 15) is the Feast of the Dormition, the Falling Asleep of the Virgin Mary.

The most difficult part of my Orthodox experience to discuss with the non-Orthodox is the place and role of the Mother of God in the Church and in my life. It is, on the one hand, deeply theological and even essential to a right understanding of the Orthodox faith, while, on the other hand, being intensely personal beyond the bounds of conversation. I am convinced, as well, that the Orthodox approach to Mary is part of the apostolic deposit, and not a later accretion.

When I was doing graduate studies some decades back, I decided to concentrate my historical research on the "cult of Mary" (the veneration of Mary) in the historical Church. And throughout all of that research the question, "When did this begin?" was uppermost in my mind. I came to a surprising conclusion. It began at the beginning.

The historical evidence for Mary's veneration is so obvious that it is simply overlooked: her place in the gospel accounts. I find much of the "historical" evidence about Christ to have a similar feature. It is amusing, and annoying, to read modern historical critics of the New Testament who come away from those documents arguing that the notion of Christ's divinity was a later development. Somehow they manage to read the New Testament and miss the most obvious thing: the writers all believe that Jesus is divine. They fail to notice that the very existence of the "Jesus material" of the New Testament exists solely because its writers believed He was God. Every line flows from that belief.

In a similar manner, Mary's place within the gospels carries a message of veneration. Those who do not see this obvious feature of the New Testament generally get lost in the details, reading too much into sayings such as Jesus' "Woman what have I to do with you?" and the like.

The Orthodox veneration of the Mother of God is grounded in its understanding of salvation. As such, the veneration of Mary is an expression of the most foundational doctrine of the faith. This is generally misunderstood by the non-Orthodox for the simple reason that they do not understand salvation itself. Salvation is about a union or communion with God. It is a participation in the very life of God. We were created for this communion, breathed into us in the act of our creation. Through sin, we have broken that communion and become subject to death and disintegration.

When this fundamental doctrine is understood, Mary's role in history and her place in the Church become clear. Christ does not enter her womb as though it were a borrowed space. The Creed says, "He took flesh of the Virgin Mary." Christ's humanity is not a separate creation, but "bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh." She is truly His mother.

We venerate the Theotokos because, knowing what we know, we cannot do otherwise.

Building a Stronger Orthodox Christian Community by: Spiritually growing together; Sharing the Orthodox Faith through fellowship, outreach, and philanthropy; Worshiping in a traditional Byzantine church; Supported through Stewardship

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Parish Council

Father began the July meeting by asking the council if we thought that our best years were behind us or ahead of us. The general consensus was that spiritually, our best years were ahead of us.

Joanna Jaquette presented a report on the prison ministry our parish has conducted at the state penitentiary in Salem and how we can help reduce recidivism.

The finances of the parish continue to be strong with income outpacing expenses.

Our recent visit from the fire marshal identified eight code violations. Steps have been taken to eliminate all of them.

The proposed computer upgrade has also taken place. New business included the opportunity to have Frederica Mathews-Green speak in Eugene and potential topics for that event. The council voted to proceed with a down payment to the Orthodox Speakers Bureau for her appearance. The council also discussed ways to increase the seating in the fellowship hall following the Gyro Fest. The city of Eugene is continuing with their plans to put a park along our southern property line.

As part of his clergy report, Father asked if our location was visible, or were we too "hidden."

Father may be taking on more responsibility for new priests in the state. He also talked about using the community TV station to increase our visibility. Father also presented a plan to move forward with strategic planning and pointed out the parish council should take the lead in his vision.

The next parish council meeting will be August 5 at 6:30.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

A Christian steward is a person who responsibly manages his/her time, talents, possessions and self. The faithful and wise steward is the one who knows the Master has set him/her in charge of the Lord's household and gives the steward(s) their portion of food at the proper time (Luke 12:42). Stewardship embraces every area of life. It calls on us to realize that we are not owners of our time and talents. We are stewards, called to manage these gifts for a brief time, always responsible to God Who entrusts them to us. It is inappropriate for God's Church to beg for offerings of

time, talent, or treasury. Each of us should give because we need to give. We need to express to God our gratitude for His countless blessings to us. We give because we need to acknowledge in our lives with such concrete things as our time, talents and possessions God does indeed come first; and He deserves the first and the best portion of all that we are and possess.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Thank you to all who worked at and supported our annual Gyrofest. It was a fun afternoon and our guests really enjoyed the delicious food.

Our next fundraiser will be the Bake Sale and Craft Fair, Dec.7 & 8. Mark your calendars! If you would like to be a vendor at our craft fair, let Julie or Presv. Maria know.

Our next committee meeting will be Aug.18, after liturgy.

Pres. Maria

Care Ministry

Do you or are you aware of another parishioner who needs emergency or crisis assistance in the way of meals, temporary childcare, medical transportation, resource assistance or a visit? The Care Ministry Team is a group of individual parishioners who are ready to help.

Please contact a Care Ministry Team member or Fr. Jerry for a referral.

Care Notes

"Let us be silent that we may hear the whisper of God." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Gloria Zeazeas-Timmons

Care Ministry Coordinator

Missions and Evangelism report

Missions Possible was a very successful campaign again this year! We exceeded our goal of \$2000 by quite a bit – with a final total of \$3325.46! Glory to God! Thank you all for your contributions! For a parish of our size, this is an amazing accomplishment! This shows the hearts of everyone to continue to spread the Good news of Jesus Christ throughout the West.

Please mark your calendars for October 3! We will be blessed to have Frederica Matthews-Green speak here in Eugene! She will be talking on the subject of the Theotokos. The presentation will be titled: “The Lost Gospel of Mary: The Mother of Jesus as seen in three ancient texts.”

I’m sure you all are familiar with some of her many books on Orthodoxy and perhaps even her podcasts on Ancient Faith. It will be so incredible to have her here! Her talk will be appropriate for both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, so start thinking of others you can invite! There will a chance to ask questions and have her sign books.

And lastly, keep sharing those friendly smiles and welcoming hearts to all our summer time visitors.

Your fellow servant, Kathryn

Greetings from the Bookstore!

I hope you have been enjoying the Summer months.

Bookstore Highlights for August

On Prayer and Reflection:

* The Small Paraklesis to the Most Holy Theotokos is chanted in times of distress and sorrow of the soul and during each evening of the Dormition Feast (the first 14 days of August). These prayers can be read at home whenever needed. During the Dormition Feast, one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, there will be special services at Church for the Small Paraklesis.

* St. John's Homilies on the Beatitudes (St. John of Kronstadt). Originally delivered as sermons, the Homilies give the reader an unusually close sense of the impact of St. John's physical presence and his spoken word. This work (1869) dates from St. John's early period. The Homilies are a document that chronicles the first steps of a saint towards holiness, before broad recognition and acclaim.

* Words of the Heart (Gerondissa Makrim Vassopoulou). This book contains the homilies (words of wisdom) on living a Christian life, as well as the wonderous life of the Abbess of blessed memory, the Venerable Gerondissa Makrim Vassopoulou.

* For the children, "Anthony, the Great!" It's hard not getting what we want. It's hard not doing what we want. It's hard.....eating Brussels sprouts! For Anthony, some lessons are bigger than others. Fortunately he has some help along the way. Join Anthony and his stuffed animal, Mikey, as they learn about the power of prayer, the importance of our spiritual struggles, and ultimately, the love of God.

I wish you many blessings and much peace. In Christ. Stella Kallianis

PHILIA

Our Philia Ladies were, as usual, very busy throughout these summer months. Not only did we prepare and deliver lunches for the Community Court attendees and leave welcome baskets for families with members in the hospital, but we also planned, worked hard and ended up with a very successful Gyro-fest in July! Thank you to everyone who made that possible! We are very grateful to the many who helped in various capacities at the event itself as well as to those who supported it and our efforts. We could not have done it without you all.

We also have a couple of new bulletin board additions. One, titled PHILIANTHROPY, notes our charitable work, and the other with the caption PHILI-ACTIVITIES displays photos of what we have been up to. In June, eight of us showed up at BJs and 14 at the Pizza Hut to celebrate Heather's graduation! And thanks to Liana's suggestion, one of our new summer activities as a group has been hiking! Several of our members, including kids and doggies had a chance to get together to explore local trails and enjoy the camaraderie of our church family. Aided by the lovely weather this has become a very pleasant and healthy thing to do.

Plans for the future:

- Community Court Lunches - August 16 and September 20.
- International Luncheon - October 6.

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zezeastimmons@gmail.com. And if interested in Rada cutlery and products please ask Julie.

Next meetings: August 11 and September 1, 2019 Come join us!

Reminder: Philia is a philanthropic organization open to ALL women in the parish. Come and join us! We could always use helping hands and helpful minds.

Julie Lenkoff, Philia Coordinator

Prison Ministry Update...

The past couple months we have continued to enjoy our study of St. Theophylact's commentary on the book of Matthew. Several of the men have asked about having a pen pal, or if their pen pal is going to write. While we are exhorted in Hebrews to remember those in prison, it is not always easy or even desirable for some people to actually visit someone in prison, so writing a letter or sending a card can be a good substitute. Receiving mail helps those incarcerated to feel remembered, supported, and even provide hope. Letters are also a great distraction from their very structured and challenging lives. Mail is also a sign to other inmates that this person is remembered, which can be very important.

When you write, however, a few rules of thumb should be followed. It is best to limit what you share about your personal life: i.e. where you live, your work place, or a lot of detail about your family. It is easy to write someone an encouraging letter, and talk about sports, food, their traditions, favorite books or music for example. One young man I write to is a native Alaskan. He has shared some interesting memories he has about growing up Orthodox in Alaska- foods they ate at holidays, childhood memories, and stories about his grandparents. He always asks me some really safe questions (what movies I have seen, what food I like, etc.) and I often ask him these same questions right back. I will also include quotes from the Fathers of the Church, sermon notes, Psalms, or even prayers. One thing to avoid is to ask about why they are incarcerated or how the length of their sentence. Keep in mind that all your letters will be read by someone in the mailroom. I have wondered if any of the mail readers have had their faith encouraged by these letters and inserts. Paul planted, Apollos watered...we just never know. It is a good work on many levels.

If you are interested in please see Fr. Jerry to receive a name & SID number for one of our Bible Study members. There is also a helpful handout with guidelines specific to Oregon correctional facilities.

Thank you for considering participating in our Prison Ministry as a pen pal. It is a wonderful way to share the love of Christ!

From the Missions...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~

Like you, Holy Cross has been watching the Parish Health Presentation from the 2019 Clergy Laity Assembly, and carefully considering how we can grow into a healthy parish. Please continue to pray for us as we discuss WHO we are, WHERE we are headed, and HOW we are going to get there! We know that there are challenges for any small parish in a rural county, and we ask that the Lord grant us clarity, unity, and courage to meet the future He has for us. We warmly invite you to join us for a service in Roseburg, and also encourage you to 'Save the Date' for the upcoming Feast Day of Holy Cross (Saturday, September 14).

With love in Christ ~ Lisa Buck

Greetings from the Salem Mission,

We always enjoy the completion of another school year as the Blanchet campus quiets down. It's nice to have a break from having to move our Orthodox items out of the way for times the school still uses the chapel and narthex space. This break from moving things inside is still true this summer, but it's anything but quiet outside our main entrance! Blanchet is in a major construction project creating a football/track/soccer field. They're reconfiguring things so that there are no longer any parking spots in front of the chapel and the main chapel entrance is inaccessible during construction.

If you plan to visit us this summer, please drive around to the back and side parking area and enter through our "Fellowship Hallway" doors under the covered area of the driveway. We'll have a sidewalk sign there and greeters to direct you! It's a bit unsettling, but is another good reminder not to get too comfortable in our temporary space!

We just completed another successful year of our food booth at the Salem Art Fair. It was so nice to see those of you that visited the booth! Thank you for your faithful prayers

Thank you for your prayers!
Maria Hauser

August Celebrations**Birthdays**

August 1st-Greg Sebastian
August 2nd-Gloria Zezeas Timmons
August 9th-Daniel Doran
August 10th-Liana Creech
August 20th-Michael Creech
August 25th-Janelle Williamson
August 28th-Nick Markopoulos

Feast Days

August 15th-Dormition
Pete Drakatos, Panayiotis Katsoyannos,
Peter Zoumboukos,
Pres. Maria, Jamie Avalos

Wedding Anniversaries

August 18th
Andrew & Larisa Lilles

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

August 13th
Marci Moling

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

News and Events

What's New!

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** The dates of the First Saturday Breakfast in August are: Food prep on Friday, August 2nd and the breakfast on Saturday, August 3rd. Many hands make for light work so please lend us yours!
- **Young Adult Conference:** There is still time to register for Young Adult Conference, Labor Day Weekend, August 29th-September 2nd. Young Adults, ages 18-35, are invited for a weekend of worship and fellowship, engaging workshops, inspiring speakers, community service and time at the beach. For more information, visit <https://sanfran.goarch.org/events>.
- **Openings:** In August there are two openings for someone to host Fellowship, (8/4 and 8/25) and three openings for someone to volunteer to clean, (8/17, 8/24, and 8/31). Please consider giving of your time to help fill these openings.
- **Dormition Fast:** The Church has appointed a fast period from August 1st-August 14th to prepare us for the dormition of the Theotokos. This is a strict fast period lasting two weeks. This is also a good time to schedule confession. Services for the feast include, Great Vespers on Wednesday, August 14th, at 6 pm, and Orthros & Liturgy for the feast on Thursday, August 15th. Paraklesis services will be offered on Friday, August 2nd & August 9th at 7 pm, and on Monday, August 12th at 6:00 pm.
- **Holy Transfiguration:** Services for the feast of Holy Transfiguration are as follows: Great Vespers on Monday, August 5th at 5:30 pm and Orthros & Divine Liturgy, followed by the blessing of grapes, on Tuesday, August 6th.
- **Vacation:** Father Jerry will be on vacation and out of the office from Thursday, August 29th, through Saturday, September 7th.
- **Safety Committee Report:** The Eugene-Springfield Fire Marshall, assigned to our church building and property, conducted their required, safety survey in July. Classroom windows are operable and smoke/carbon monoxide detectors have been installed in each of those classrooms. All emergency lighting and exit signs function properly. Fire extinguishers have been serviced recently. Electric cords/extension cords meet safety requirements. Candle use was reviewed. Storage and decorative wall issues have been addressed. We meet the fire code specifications in all areas and are ready for the re-inspection on August 2nd. We have set up a maintenance schedule to be conducted by members of the Safety Committee. Thanks to those that helped by lending their timer and energy to this project The next meeting of the Emergency Response Team, an integral part of the Safety Committee, will be on Sunday, August 4th, following Liturgy. Gloria Zezeas-Timmons, Safety Committee Coordinator

"I go, you go..."

We all go for GYRO!



KOINONIA

	8/4	8/11	8/18	8/25	
FELLOWSHIP	Potluck	Strand	Spears	Potluck	
GREETER	Stella	Helen S	John & Gloria	Jerry R	
PROSFORON	Creech	Lilles	Kaelin	Markopoulos	
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	
CLEANING CREW	8/3 Thomas Zoumboukos	8/10 Sollars	8/17 Open	8/24 Open	8/31 Open

GET INVOLVED!!!

Look through this list of organizations, programs, and ministries at our parish,
then call the contact person and get involved!!!

PARISH COUNCIL	Neal Zoumboulos 541-344-4485
SAFETY COMMITTEE	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
BOOKSTORE	Stella Kallianis 541-274-9110
PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
CHURCH SCHOOL	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
CHANTER/CHANT GROUP	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN	Art Mehas 541-485-8671
FELLOWSHIP	Bonnie Sollars 541-852-9496
STEWARDSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
GREETERS	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
CARE MINISTRY	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
PRAYER CIRCLE	Bonnie Sollars 541-852-9496
MISSIONS & EVANGELISM	Kathryn Becker 971-506-7161
FUNDRAISERS	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112

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A Good word or two...

"God is visiting you when tears come during prayer."
Elder Amphilochios Makris of Patmos

"If a man doesn't start to work on himself, then the devil
will find another job for him-to seek for flaws in others."
St. Paisios the Athonite