

August 12, 2019

Greetings to all the Faithful of St. Andrew's
Glory to Jesus Christ!

We are coming to the very end of our Church's liturgical year. September 1st marks a new beginning. The very first Great Feast of the new Ecclesiastical year is the Nativity or Birth of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Theotokos, on September 8th. The last Great Feast of the Church year is the Dormition or the Falling Asleep of the Virgin Mary. We Orthodox Christians start the Church's New Year with the birth of Mary and we bring it to a close with the remembrance of her passage into the Kingdom of Heaven on August 15th.

In between these two Feast Days of the Blessed Virgin we celebrate the events in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We remember his Nativity, his teaching ministry, his crucifixion and his resurrection on the third day, his ascension into Heaven, his sitting at the right hand of God the Father, his sending of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and his Glorious and second coming. So important are these themes that in fact every Liturgy brings all of them together. Throughout the rest of the Church Year each of these becomes the focal point of a particular Feast. For example, the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost is the "birthday of the Church." The power of the Holy Spirit is manifested in the life of the Church in which the Virgin Mary has and always will have very special place. In Luke's narrative which begins in the Gospel of Luke, Mary is presented as the first to receive the Word of God and in the book of Acts, the second volume of Luke's story, Mary is specifically mentioned as being present in the upper room as the Apostles awaited the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Come and join us this Thursday, August 15, as we celebrate the Dormition of the Virgin and her translation into the Kingdom of Heaven through the power of her resurrected Son, which foreshadows the translation of us believers into Heaven through the Lord Jesus!

Following the Liturgy on Thursday, we will bless flowers and herbs and celebrate together with a potluck luncheon. Please bring something to share!

In Christ,
Fr. Herman