



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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The Protection of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary October 1, 2017

Troparion – Tone 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!// O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

Troparion – Tone 4

Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy, illumined by thy coming, O Mother of God. Beholding thy pure image, we fervently cry to thee: “Encompass us beneath the precious veil of thy protection; deliver us from every form of evil by entreating Christ, thy Son and our God,// that He may save our souls.”

Troparion – Tone 4

Thou didst gladden Christ’s Church by thy melodies like an inspired heavenly trumpet. Thou wast enlightened by the Mother of God and didst shine on the world as God’s poet.// We lovingly honor thee, O righteous Romanus.

Kontakion – Tone 8

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrected Adam. Eve exults in Thy Resurrection, and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Kontakion – Tone 8

Thou wast adorned from childhood with the godly virtues of the Spirit; thou wast a precious adornment of the Church of Christ, all-wise Romanus, for thou didst make it lovely with beautiful hymnody. Therefore we entreat thee, grant thy divine gift to those who desire it, that we may cry out to thee: “Rejoice, all-blessed Father, beauty of the Church!”

Kontakion – Tone 3

Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and bishops worship, Apostles and Prophets rejoice together,// since for our sake she prays to the pre-eternal God.

Prokeimenon – Tone 8

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!

v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel

Prokeimenon – Tone 3

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. On the anniversary of the arrival of the Russian missionaries in Alaska (1794), we remember the New Martyrs Saint Peter the Aleut, Protomartyr of America, and Saint Juvenal.

The Protection of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

The Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos: "Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, Since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!"

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop's Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed "more than the rays of the sun." Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, "Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?" Epiphanius answered, "I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe."

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, "O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard."

Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and "for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation."

At the Blachernae church, the memory of the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and clerk Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting Saint Andrew in contemplation of her.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor reflects that the protective intercession of the Mother of God was needed because an attack of a large pagan Russian fleet under the leadership of Askole and Dir. The feast celebrates the divine destruction of the fleet which threatened Constantinople itself, sometime in the years 864-867 or according to the Russian historian Vasiliev, on June 18, 860. Ironically, this Feast is considered important by the Slavic Churches but not by the Greeks.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor also notes the miraculous deliverance followed an all-night Vigil and the dipping of the garment of the Mother of God into the waters of the sea at the Blachernae church, but does not mention Saints Andrew and Epiphanius and their vision of the Mother of God at prayer. These latter elements, and the beginnings of the celebrating of the Feast of the Protection, seem to postdate Saint Nestor and the Chronicle. A further historical complication might be noted under (October 2) dating Saint Andrew's death to the year 936.

The year of death might not be quite reliable, or the assertion that he survived to a ripe old age after the vision of his youth, or that his vision involved some later pagan Russian raid which met with the same fate. The suggestion that Saint Andrew was a Slav (or a Scythian according to other sources, such as S. V. Bulgakov) is interesting, but not necessarily accurate. The extent of Slavic expansion and repopulation into Greece is the topic of scholarly disputes.

In the PROLOGUE, a Russian book of the twelfth century, a description of the establishment of the special Feast marking this event states, "For when we heard, we realized how wondrous and merciful was the vision... and it transpired that Your holy Protection should not remain without festal celebration, O Ever-Blessed One!"

Therefore, in the festal celebration of the Protection of the Mother of God, the Russian Church sings, "With the choirs of the Angels, O Sovereign Lady, with the venerable and glorious prophets, with the First-Ranked Apostles and with the Hieromartyrs and Hierarchs, pray for us sinners, glorifying the Feast of your Protection in the Russian Land." Moreover, it would seem that Saint Andrew, contemplating the miraculous vision was a Slav, was taken captive, and became the slave of the local inhabitant of Constantinople named Theognostus.

Churches in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God began to appear in Russia in the twelfth century. Widely known for its architectural merit is the temple of the Protection at Nerl, which was built in the year 1165 by holy Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky. The efforts of this holy prince also established in the Russian Church the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, about the year 1164.

At Novgorod in the twelfth century there was a monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (the so-called Zverin monastery) In Moscow also under Tsar Ivan the Terrible the cathedral of the Protection of the Mother of God was built at the church of the Holy Trinity (known as the church of Saint Basil the Blessed).

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, "Remember us in your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you."

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty." Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance.

Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Service Schedule for the week of October 1

Today – 9:00 AM Church School, 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Saturday October 7 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday October 8 – 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy and 12:30 Catechumen Class in the Church

Weekly Giving

September 24 – 40 adults , 14 youth , \$2,636

Parish Announcements

The final Catechumen class will be held in the church on Sunday October 8 at 12:30 PM; this will be a presentation given by Father Paul on our church's history and iconography. Everyone is invited to the class, but all Catechumens are required to attend.

The annual picnic was held last week at the church picnic grounds – we had a very good turnout, lots of good food, great entertainment and games for the children, and a lot of camaraderie amongst our parishioners. Thank you to all who attended and those who cleaned, prepared, cooked, and donated food!

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Johnson family (Gabriele's son) in Texas. Gabriele is very appreciative of our generosity to her family and sends her love and prayers to everyone.

On Saturday October 21 at 10:00 AM, Natasha Shynkarenko and Caryl Peck's new baby daughter – Katia – will be baptized, and their daughter – Oksana - will be Chrismated in the Orthodox faith. All are invited to the church services.

Future church fundraisers:

Turkey Social – Sunday November 12

Christmas Bake Sale – Saturday December 16

More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. *Everyone is asked to please start baking and freezing Christmas cookies for the bake sale as cookie trays will be the main focus of the sale.*