

St. Mary's Orthodox Church  
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602  
Phone: 570-645-2772  
OUR WEBSITE: [www.stmarysnativity.org](http://www.stmarysnativity.org)

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic  
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

**Sunday, August 15, 2021**  
Choir Director: Wash King

8<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Tone 7

The Dormition (“Falling Asleep”) of our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

*Glory Be to Jesus Christ*

*Glory Be Forever!*

Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.

To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.

For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy,  
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
to proclaim that Thou art risen,//  
granting the world great mercy.

Tone 1 Troparion (Feast)

In giving birth thou didst preserve thy virginity.

In falling asleep thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos.

Thou wast translated to life, O Mother of Life,//

and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.

Tone 7 Kontakion (Resurrection)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.

Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:

“The Savior has come to those in faith,//  
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

Tone 2 Kontakion (Feast)

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos,  
who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions.

For being the Mother of Life,//

she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her virginal womb.

The church bulletin is in transition from the financial secretary to the rector. We ask going forward, all donations (no cash, please use checks) be mailed to the church: St. Mary's Orthodox Church, 217 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Coaldale, PA 18218. Of course, you can continue placing donations in the donation's basket in the church when attending services. Also, we have a black binder at the candle desk for candle/flower offerings for 'the health of' or 'in memory of'. Please see one of our council members who are stationed at the candle desk. In the near future, we will have the Parastas included with this transition. Mistakes will occur as you may have seen. I, Fr. James, take responsibility for these errors. Thank you for your consideration during this transition.

#### SERVICES

Sunday, August 15 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy (Dormition of the Theotokos)-Blessing of Flowers  
Sunday, August 22 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy  
Sunday, August 29 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy (Beheading of St. John The Baptist) Strict Fast Day  
to follow: Parastas

#### Offerings for August 15

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of Helen Yurchak offered by Gary Harahuess  
Altar Candles... For the Health of Claire & Odess Remington offered by the Teno Family  
Eternal Lamp... In memory of Helen Ostrosky offered by Julia Forte  
Vigil Crosses ... In memory of Helen Scheese offered by Steve & Sandy Matsick  
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of Lillian Yelsh offered by William Yelsh  
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod... In memory of Andrew & Mary Bybel Family offered by Family Members

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772. Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

#### CONFESSION

Confessions have resumed with minor modifications. Please call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. Call between 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread out during the week. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Anyone wanting to have a confession, but has concerns of COVID-19, should contact Father James to make the appropriate accommodations.

#### Prayer List:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic  
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Raymond Danchak, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Ellen Gundersen, Karen Harkins, John King, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Olga Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Melissa Schmitt, Olga Sidorik, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Marie Yurchak.

August Birthdays: 2- David Bogosh, 5- Rose Harkins, 14-David King, 22-Nancy Lorchak

August Anniversaries: 20- Dennis & Geri Vavra

Financials: Candles 57 Altar Candles 20 Offerings 1,077 Non-Envelope 160 Holy Day 76 = Total \$1,390



## FEAST OF THE DORMITION



### “REJOICE, I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS”

**O**ne may wonder what became of the Theotokos after her Son ascended into heaven? We know that she was entrusted to the care of the Apostle John. The Book of Acts mentions her being with the apostles on the first Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon them in the form of tongues of fire. Other than that, it is thought that she spent most of her time in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas, visiting the meaningful



places that were significant in the earthly life of Christ. Sacred tradition tells us that she spent much time praying on the Mount of Olives and in the Garden of Gethsemane, asking God to take her from this world and reunite her with her beloved Son.

One day, her prayers were answered. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to her, telling her that in three days, her earthly existence would come to an end. She received this news joyfully, and returned to John's home in Jerusalem, fervently hoping to see all of the apostles one final time.

God was to fulfill her desire. All of Christ's faithful followers, with the exception of Thomas, managed to be with her when she peacefully commended her soul into God's hands. She was buried in the Garden of Gethsemane near the tombs of her parents, Joachim and Anna.

Three days later, the Apostle Thomas arrived, wanting to pay his respects to the Theotokos. When the Virgin's tomb was opened, only the winding sheet was found. Her body was not there! Later that evening, the apostles had a vision of the Mother of God, surrounded by a multitude of angelic hosts. She left them with these words: "REJOICE, I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS." This is why we continue to pray to her and ask her to intercede on our behalf.

The exact age of the Theotokos at the time of her falling asleep cannot be stated definitively. The popular belief, however, is she was at least 60 years of age.

Silent Prayer before reading the Holy Scripture:

Illumine our hearts, O Master Who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 (*Epistle*)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you.

Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.

Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Philippians 2:5-11 (*Epistle, Theotokos*)

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



Matthew 14:14-22 (*Gospel*)

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food."

But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me."

Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes.

So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (*Gospel, Theotokos*)

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!"

## Medical Bioethics: An Orthodox Christian Perspective for Orthodox Christians

by Protodeacon Basil Andruchow

(Continued from last week's bulletin)

Parish Ministry Resources - Medical Bioethics: An Orthodox Christian Perspective for Orthodox Christians -  
Orthodox Church in America (oca.org)

### **Cremation**

The Orthodox tradition of burying its dead is the normative practice of our Church. However, there has been a resurgent interest in cremation in recent decades. While there are no canonical or dogmatic traditions prohibiting cremation, the common practice of cremation, at least in the Roman Empire under the influence of Christians, was abolished in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. In general, the Orthodox Church has considered cremations in lieu of burial a dishonoring of the dead. This is in accordance and consistent with Christ's death, burial and subsequent resurrection. Consequently, an Orthodox Christian lives in anticipation of Christ's second coming and the resurrection of our bodies. However, it is important to realize that our resurrected body is not considered to be a 'physical' body but to be our 'spiritual' body. Thus, it follows that the lack of a physical body, such as in the case of total destruction in a fire or explosion, in no way affects a person's salvation.

The most pertinent reasons for our Church's practice of burying its dead rests not only on the fact of Christ's death, burial and resurrection but also on our Church's teaching that there is a continuity between the 'living' and the 'dead'. The physical body demands respect because it is considered to have housed the 'temple' of God and as such, it too is worthy of remembrance. This is clearly demonstrated by the bodies of the Saints whereby they have exhibited clear signs of sanctification and holiness after their death. Further, it is our Orthodox Church's practice and tradition to have memorial services at the cemetery over the body in remembrance of our departed loved ones.

There are situations wherein certain countries (Japan) and certain states (Louisiana) require cremation by law. In such cases the law is to be obeyed. However, the ashes should be placed in an urn and buried in a cemetery. In all other cases, the Orthodox practice of burial should be followed.

### **Organ Donation**

There are two opposing theological viewpoints within the Orthodox Church regarding the donation of one's body organs upon death.

First there is the view which maintains that since we are all created in the image of God, the harvesting of organs should be considered a form of mutilation and be thereby prohibited by the Church.

The other perspective is that there is no greater gift that a dying person can give than to donate a vital organ(s) so that someone's life may be improved and/or prolonged. In fact, it might even be said that we are morally obligated to provide these organs, which we will no longer need, as a gift of unconditional brotherly or sisterly love for our neighbor.



Some express the fear that the bodies of humans will be viewed as simply a source of ‘spare parts’. This is hardly the situation, at least in this country, whereby Hospital and Medical Centers go to great lengths to insure informed consent; that is to say, a person’s organs upon death are not be taken without the expressed written consent of the patient. If an Orthodox Christian has died without leaving written consent to remove his/her organs, they should not be removed.

### **Summary**

*“Human beings are to be reminded by every means that they are not isolated individuals but are members one of another who will give account to God and to their fellow creatures for their every thought, word and deed; and that their eternal destiny depends on what they have done with their lives on earth.”*

1992 OCA Synod of Bishops’ Affirmations, “On Marriage, Family, Sexuality and the Sanctity of Life”—Sickness, Suffering and Death

This synopsis of some of the more important medical bioethical issues facing us today as Orthodox Christians is not intended to be a complete presentation of all the issues and topics nor should it be considered an official document. Rather, it is intended to spark thought and discussion with regard to medical bioethical considerations and decision-making. For a more exhaustive treatment of these topics and issues, the reader is referred to and encouraged to read the following books by Fr. John Breck:

- John Breck, *Stages on Life’s Way: Orthodox Thinking on Bioethics*, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY (2006)
- John Breck, *The Sacred Gift of Life: Orthodox Christianity and Bioethics*, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY (1999)

The behavioral and moral dilemmas that we face and will face as medical and scientific technologies rapidly emerge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are complex and demand deep consideration. Much of what is and will be available to physicians as the result of medical research represents great benefits to humankind. The tremendous advances in cardiac care, such as therapeutic protocols for heart attacks and innovative surgical techniques used to correct heart artery/valve problems, are only one of the many areas of medical advancement/achievement that have improved the quality and length of human life. On the other hand, the medical frontier becomes a slippery slope when medical research and practices are found to be in stark opposition to the core tenets of the Orthodox Church and its teachings.

*This document was prepared by Protodeacon Andruchow for parish presentation and discussion at St. Nicholas Church, Salem, MA. Reprinted by the OCA Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid with permission.*

Protodeacon Basil Andruchow is retired and attends St. Nicholas OCA Parish in Salem, MA. With a doctorate in Environmental Chemistry, he held the position of Quality Assurance Manager for the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority. He is a member of the OCA Medical Ethics Commission.

THANK YOU FOR READING THIS FAR!