

ST. NICHOLAS BULLETIN

Sunday, July 31, 2016

Tone 5. Rom., 12:6-14, Gospel, Matt. 9:1-8

Righteous Eudocimus / St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre

FRIDAY 4:30 p.m. Vespers (Eve of Transfiguration)
SATURDAY 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy (Transfiguration of Our Lord God
and Savior Jesus Christ and Blessing of Fruit)

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOUR will be held today, following the Divine Liturgy.

A MOST SINCERE AND SPECIAL THANK YOU to all those who played a part in our 100th Anniversary Celebration. We were blessed to have so many people give of themselves in so many ways. We also extend a special thank you to all those who made special donations for this event. May God's richest blessings be upon each one of you. Your response was overwhelming and greatly appreciated.

ALTAR TABLE CANDLES (7) offered by Pauline Yuschak, in memory of Olga and Bill White
LORD'S TOMB VIGILS (7) offered by Alice and Fred Danchenko, in memory of Jay Punzell

ANNIVERSARY DONATIONS

Nick and Carol Kuzemka, \$1,000
Sandy and James Klizas, \$500
Rob and Natalie Montini, \$300
Janice Loraw, \$300
Nancy Muzzy, \$250
Fr. John & Mat. Eugenia Nehrebecki, \$200
Danchenko Family, \$100
Barry Migyanko, \$100
Joceline D. Champagne, \$50
George and Dorothy Klipa, \$50
Rev. Thomas and Mat. Joni Soroka, \$50
Fr. Steven Shuga, \$20
Natalie Aitken Tooch, \$20

Thank you for your kind offering to the Church!

The Role of the Most Holy Theotokos as Protector of the World

Throughout history, in times of misfortune as in times of individual trials and sorrows, Orthodox people throughout the world have sought help, comfort, strength and protection from the Mother of God.

In theological terms, the Theotokos is our Protectress since she is the Mother of God. We know in our human experience that the pleadings between a mother and son can carry great weight. The very special and unique relationship that the Virgin Mary held with Jesus as her Son, our Lord, makes her a truly powerful intercessor for our salvation. The Mother of God is a mediator between earth and heaven, an Intercessor for the world before the throne of God's glory. Therefore, whenever we pray to God and ask the Theotokos to intercede for our salvation, we are invoking intercessions which carry a distinctively high degree of influence.

This powerful role of the Theotokos as a Divine Protectress is recognized historically and liturgically. The foundation of the holiday was an event that occurred on October 14, 910 in the besieged city of Constantinople by the Saracens, in the Blachernae church, which housed a robe, head cover and a belt of the Blessed Virgin. Among the worshipers at night Vigil was blessed Andrew and his disciple Epiphanius. Looking at the sky, St. Andrew suddenly saw the Blessed Virgin, marched through the air surrounded by angels and saints. Kneeling, the Blessed Virgin continued praying, and then went to the altar of the temple, took off with his head veil (veil) and spread it over the people praying in church, marking the conferred by it to all the Christian world from the enemy. When the Virgin Mary has departed, then cover became invisible.

In as much as Christians throughout history have sought the intercessions of the Theotokos for spiritual salvation, they have also asked for her intercessions for physical protection itself. For example, historical accounts of entire masses of people praying for the intercessions of the Theotokos to protect them from physical danger have been documented in many nations throughout the world.

The world has not been abandoned in its sorrow, nor is man alone in his grief: for us, and together with us, grieves the Holy Virgin. Yes, we know that we are great sinners, but we also know that we have not been forgotten by the Mother of God, to Whom each human soul is precious. Can there be any greater comfort? Throughout the ages the joy of the Holy Virgin's Protection shines in the hearts of the faithful, the joy of Her prayer for the world.

The Theotokos' prayer, with which the Holy Spirit Himself prays, is all-powerful:

"Remember us in thy supplications, O Virgin Lady and Theotokos, that we not perish because of the multitude of our sins. Protect us from all evil and grievous perils, for in thee do we put our trust, and honoring the feast of thy protection, we magnify thee."