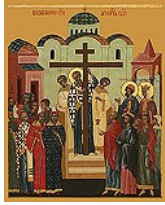


✠Bulletin✠

Week of August 2, 2026



Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 8

Translation of the Relics of the Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople (ca. 428). Hieromartyr Stephen, Pope of Rome, and those with him (257). Translation of the relics of Martyrs Dada, Maximus, and Quintilian, at Dorostolum in Moesia (286). The finding of the Relics of the Righteous Nikódēmos, Gamaliel, and Abibas (1st c.). Holy Fool Basil of Kamen (15th c.). Blessed Basil of Kubensk (Vologda) (1472). St. Marco of Belavinsk (Vologda) (1492). Blessed Basil of Moscow, Fool-for-Christ (1552). New Martyr Theodore of the Dardanelles (1692). New Hieromartyr Platon (Kolegov), hieromonk, of Chasovo (Komi) (1937).

Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule

Sunday August 2nd

9:15 am - Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Wednesday August 5th

5:30 pm – Great Vespers with Litya for the

Feast of Transfiguration

Confessions

Thursday August 6th

8:45 am – Hours

9:00 am - Divine Liturgy for the

Feast of Transfiguration

Blessing of Fruit to follow

Weekly Schedule

Sunday August 2nd

- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

By Fr. George Timko

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. (Matt 17:1-3)

James, John and Peter were eyewitnesses to one of the most striking events in our Lord's life. This event is known as the Transfiguration. Transfiguration is the name given to the incident that took place on Mount Tabor when Christ's whole appearance changed, and He reflected a brilliant, overpowering light. At that moment, the power and glory of God was revealed in all its majesty and force.

Jesus Christ is not considered as just any other ordinary man. For He embodied a quality of being that characterized Him as the one who is God-Man. This means that He possessed not only human nature but divine nature as well. Yet throughout His earthly ministry, the glory of His divinity was restrained, and He appeared as any other man. But on Mount Tabor, He made known the Divine Glory of His being, thereby giving evidence of His higher nature. Unveiling His divine character, He showed Himself through the energy of light as "true God of true God".

"On the Mount, O Christ, You manifested the vivid brightness of Your Divine Substance and Majesty, which was hidden by Your body..." [Matins]

Our Lord's Transfiguration is closely associated with the glorified nature of His Resurrection. It is referred to in the services as a "prefiguring of His Resurrection". We can even say that the Transfiguration was a forecast of His victory over death; it was in fact a "preview" of Christ's final resurrected state of being.

"Before Your Crucifixion, O Lord, You were transfigured before Your disciples, and thereby You illuminated them with the rays of Your power and You showed them the light of the Resurrection." [Vespers]

During His Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Christ. According to St. Luke, they talked about our Lord's death, resurrection and ascension. Though Moses and Elijah died many years before, their presence reveals that they are living beyond the physical realm of this world, that they dwell in the glory and grace of God, and that they participate in the redemptive victory of Jesus Christ:

"Jesus has manifested Himself today on Mount Tabor as Divine, raising up Moses and Elijah as witnesses of His grace, thereby making them partakers of His joy and precursors of the good message of salvation and deliverance through His Cross and Resurrection...." [Vespers]

The presence of Moses and Elijah shows that they play an important role in the redemptive plan of God and that they are very closely related to Christ and His Mission. In fact, Moses, Elijah and Jesus represent the three stages in God's plan of revelation and salvation: Moses represents the Law; Elijah represents the Prophets; and Jesus is the Messiah. Christ is the completion of the whole plan. He is the realization of man's saving union with God. In Him the Old Covenant is fulfilled and transformed by the transfiguring light and energy of the New Covenant:

"The darkness of the Law was displaced by the brilliant light of the Transfiguration, in which Moses and Elijah happened to find themselves and be counted worthy of this tremendous glory...." [Vespers]

Christ's Transfiguration also shows us how we can finally come to be changed. It is a glimpse of glorified humanity, of man's potential possibilities of power and transformation. It is our assurance that we too can come to be transfigured and dwell in the glory and majesty of God; that we too can come to radiate the glorious light of divine likeness; that we too can come to be transformed into new spiritual beings of divine illumination:

"When You were transfigured on Mount Tabor, O our Savior, You did reveal the complete transformation that will finally take place in mortal men at the time of Your second and awesome coming." [Matins]

For us the meaning of the Transfiguration may be summarized as follows: It is evidence of God's power and glory, which Jesus Christ embodied within Himself. It is the manifestation of Jesus Christ as glorified human nature achieving the fulfillment of God's final redemptive plan for mankind. It is the pledge of our own final complete transfiguration into a perfect state of spiritual being. It is a testimony to man's eternal vision of the majestic glory of God as revealed through His creation.

"When You were transfigured on the Mountain, O Our Savior, You did shine forth with the glorious divine splendor of God's own Radiance in the presence of your chosen few disciples; thereby showing us that those who attain the heights of virtue shall also be made worthy of Your Holy Divine Glory. Moses and Elijah talked with You, O Christ, thereby revealing that You rule over the living and the dead, and that You are the same God who spoke through the Law and the Prophets of old. The voice of the Father bore witness unto You from a radiant cloud saying: 'Listen to Him. This is my beloved Son who by the Cross has destroyed Hades and has bestowed eternal life upon the dead'." [Vespers]

Why do Orthodox Bless Grapes and Fruit on the Feast of the Transfiguration of Christ (August 6th)?

"The blessing of grapes, as well as other fruits and vegetables on this day is the most beautiful and adequate sign of the final transfiguration of all things in Christ. It signifies the ultimate flowering and fruitfulness of all creation in the paradise of God's unending Kingdom of Life where all will be transformed by the glory of the Lord." *Volume II – Worship, The Church Year, Transfiguration*

Grapes are brought because they are directly related to the Eucharistic sacrament; that is why in the prayer for consecration of grapes the priest says, "Bless, Lord, this new fruit of vine which reached ripeness because Thou kindly provided good weather, drops of rain and stillness. Let eating this fruit of vine make us joyful. And give us the honor of offering this fruit to Thee, as the gift of purging of sins, altogether with the Holy Body of Thy Christ."
Bishop Alexander (Mileant)

49th Diocesan Assembly for the Diocese of the South

By Reader Theophan

From July 21st through the 24th the Diocese of the South held their annual Diocesan Assembly in St. Augustine, FL where clergy and lay delegates from all across the diocese came together to prayerfully wish His Eminence Archbishop Alexander a wonderful retirement and to submit our nomination for His Grace Bishop Gerasim as ruling bishop. Among other official diocesan business such as approving the budget and hearing and voting on proposed amendments to the bylaws of the diocese, there were numerous services and ample time for fellowship.

The session on Tuesday concluded with brief but powerful words from Archbishop Alexander in which he remarked that, "All of this (i.e. the work done in the diocese) and I am nothing without Christ." Tuesday and Thursday evenings also included vespers and Wednesday morning began with a Pontifical Divine Liturgy at Annunciation Orthodox Church in Jacksonville, FL, the last for Archbishop Alexander as our ruling bishop. Father Alexei Rukavitsa and his flock graciously hosted 200+ faithful with a wonderful meal afterwards in celebration of Archbishop Alexander and Annunciation recently being awarded full parish status, previously having been a mission.

Thursday evening ended with a banquet where His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and several clergy from across the diocese recounted their first, often times humorous, experiences meeting Archbishop Alexander and the love they all shared for him and his work for the diocese this last decade. Metropolitan Tikhon remarked that he wasn't sure if this was going to turn into a roast or if it should be kept fairly tame. I think they struck a perfect balance of the two.

Friday's moleben and special nominating session took place at St. Justin Martyr Church in Jacksonville, FL, under Father Theodore Pisarchuk, where Bishop Gerasim was unanimously nominated as candidate to fill the vacant see of Dallas and the Diocese of the South. The assembly concluded with a shared meal provided by the parish and travel blessings by the Metropolitan.

God Grant You Many Years!

Birthdays

Anatoli Grubii 8/12

John Pavlou 8/12

Violet Elizabeth Anderson 8/27

Anniversaries

Scott & Anne Peatross 8/01

Craig (Luke) & Leslie Holland 8/03

John & Rose Gala 8/10

Seth (Basil) & Lauren (Rachael) Jewett 8/12

2026 Monthly Donations for Church Votive Candles

The church uses 12-hour 51% Beeswax votives, which are a cleaner burning candle and protect the church walls from soot. The approximate monthly cost of these votives for weekend Vespers & Divine Liturgy is \$100.00 per month. If you would like to donate (as a memorial, thanksgiving, or just to donate), please see Tanya Grubii. Thank you!

August & Feast Days

September

October

November

December

December Feast Days

Schedule of Services

Friday August 14th

5:30 pm - Divine Liturgy for the

Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos

Blessing of Flowers & Seeds to follow

Sunday August 16th

Following Divine Liturgy

Back to School Backpack Blessing

(All students bring your backpacks

or a school material, ex. Laptop, book, pencils)

Saturday August 22nd

5:30 pm - Great Vespers & Confessions

Friday August 28th

(Strict Fast)

5:30 pm - Divine Liturgy

Beheading of St. John the Baptist

Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding Orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

tithe.ly.com

Another way to “donate”. This app can be downloaded to your phone and Holy Cross can be accessed via this app. Also, tithe.ly can be accessed through the church website www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org

Prayer Requests

Agape Brill

Walter Kallaur – brother of the Constantine & Arlene Kallaur

Anne and Scott Peatross

Nicholas Kowalski

Robert Kozera

Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos’ daughter

Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,

Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,

Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,

Roman, Mykola

Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.

The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

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!

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Stephen)

Your relics have risen from the depths of the earth,
like a treasury for the immortal life of all creation.

The Church, rejoicing in the grace that she receives from them,
dutifully honors you, O Protomartyr Stephen.//

Preserve us from error and heresy by your intercession!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.

Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,//

and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Tone 6 Kontakion (St. Stephen)

You were the first to be sown on the earth by the Heavenly Husbandman, O
all-praised one,

and were the first to shed your blood on the earth for Christ, O blessed one.

You were the first to receive the crown of victory from Him in heaven, //

O Stephen, first of the suffering God-crowned martyrs.

Tone 6 (Steadfast Protectress....)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,

constant Advocate before the Creator:

do not despise the cry of us sinners,

but in your goodness come speedily to help us

who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us,

O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you.

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (*Ps. 75:10a*)

V. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel. (Ps. 75:1)

1 Corinthians 3:9-17 (Epistle)

For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.
According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder
I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take
heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that
which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation
with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will
become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire;

and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

Tone 8

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

V. Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! (Ps. 94:1)

V. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! (Ps. 94:2)

Matthew 15:32-39 (Saturday's Gospel)

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?" Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few little fish." So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.

Matthew 14:22-34 (Gospel)

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord,

if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading

Matthew 14:22-34 (Gospel)

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

22. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. By saying "constrained", Matthew suggests how inseparable the disciples were from Jesus, for they wanted to be with Him at all times. He sends the multitudes away, not wishing to draw them after Him lest He appear to vaunt in His powers.

23-24. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. He went up on the mountain to show that we should pray in an undistracted manner; everything He did was for our sake as He Himself had no need of prayer. He prayed on into the evening, teaching us not to cease praying after a short time, and also to pray especially at night, for it is very quiet then. He permits the disciples to be caught in a storm, so that they might learn to endure trials bravely and that they might know His power. The boat was out in the very middle of the sea so that their fear would be greater.

25-27. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." He did not appear immediately to them to calm the storm, but at the fourth watch, [that is, as the night was coming to its end], teaching us not to ask for a swift solution to our misfortunes but to endure them bravely. The night was divided into four parts by soldiers who stood guard in shifts, each "watch"

lasting three hours. So then, sometime after the ninth hour of the night, the Lord appeared to them as God, walking on the water. But they thought it was a phantom, so extraordinary and strange was the sight. For they did not recognize Him by figure, because it was night and because of fear. He first strengthens their resolve by saying: It is I Who can do all things; take courage.

28. And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." As Peter had the most fervent love for Christ, he desires immediately, before the others, to be near Him. For he believes not only that Jesus Himself walks on the water, but that He will grant this to him as well. Peter did not say, "Bid me to walk," but rather "to come unto You." The former would have been ostentation; the latter is love for Christ.

29-30. So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" The Lord laid the sea down beneath Peter's feet, revealing His power. See how Peter prevailed over that which was greater, the sea, but was afraid of the lesser peril, the wind; such is the weakness of human nature. And it was as soon as he became afraid that he began to sink. For when his faith weakened, then Peter went down. The Lord did this so that Peter would not become puffed up, and to console the other disciples who perhaps envied him. Whereupon Christ also showed how much greater He was than Peter.

31-33. And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." Showing that the cause of his sinking was not the wind but faintheartedness, Christ does not rebuke the wind, but the fainthearted Peter. This is why He raised him up and set him on the water but allowed the wind to blow. Peter did not doubt in everything, but in part. Inasmuch as he was afraid, he showed lack of faith; but by crying out, "Lord, save me," he was healed of his unbelief. This is why he hears the words, "O you of little faith" and not, "O you of no faith." Those in the boat were also delivered from fear, for "the wind ceased." And then, indeed, recognizing Jesus by these things, they confessed His divinity. For it is not an attribute of man to walk on the sea, but of God, as David says, "In the sea are Thy byways, and Thy paths in many waters." (Psalm 76:19) The spiritual meaning of the miracle is this: the boat is the earth; the waves, man's life that is troubled by evil spirits; the night is ignorance. In the fourth watch, that is, at the end of the ages, Christ appeared. The first watch was the covenant with Abraham; the second, the law of Moses; the third, the

prophets; and the fourth, the coming of Christ. For He saved those who were drowning when He came and was with us so that we might know and worship Him as God. See also how Peter's later denial, return, and repentance were prefigured by what happened to him here on the sea. Just as there he says boldly, "I will not deny Thee", so here he says, "Bid me to come on the water." And just as then he was permitted to deny, so now he was permitted to sink. Here the Lord gives His hand to him and does not let him drown, but there, by Peter's repentance, Christ drew him out of the abyss of denial.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!