

HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL, ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH SACRAMENTO

4633 Raley Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95838

13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a dupa Rusalii (Vindecarea lunaticului)



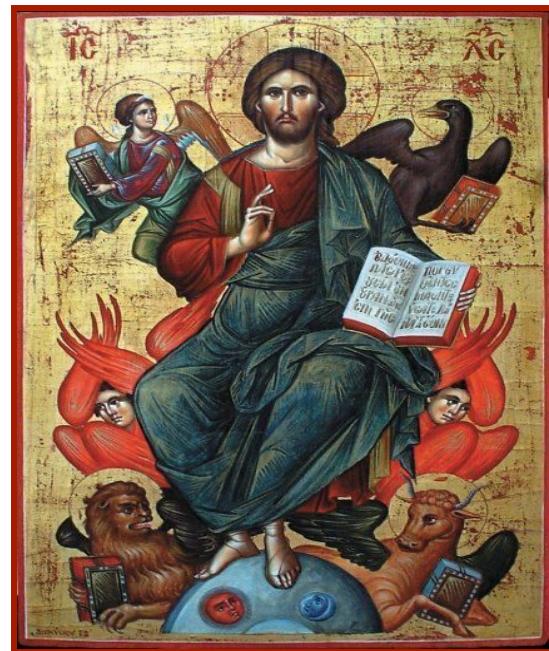
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### Evanghelia Duminicii (Vindecarea lunaticului (Matei 17: 14-23)

In vremea aceea, "Mergand ei spre multime, s-a apropiat de El un om, cazandu-I in genunchi, si zicand: Doamne, miluieste pe fiul meu ca este lunatic si patimeste rau, caci adesea cade in foc si adesea in apa. Si l-am dus la ucenicii Tai si n-au putut sa-l vindece. Iar Iisus, raspunzand, a zis: O, neam necredincios si indaratnic, pana cand voi fi cu voi? Pana cand va voi suferi pe voi? Aduceti-l aici la Mine. Si Iisus l-a certat si demonul a iesit din el si copilul s-a vindecat din ceasul acela. Atunci, apropiindu-se ucenicii de Iisus, I-au zis de o parte: De ce noi n-am putut sa-l scoatem? Iar Iisus le-a raspuns: Pentru putina voastră credință. Caci adevarat graiesc voua: Daca veti avea credinta cat un graunte de mustar, veti zice muntelui acestuia: Muta-te de aici dincolo, si se va muta; si nimic nu va fi voua cu neputinta. Dar acest neam de demoni nuiese decat numai cu rugaciune si cu post. Pe cand strabateau Galileea, Iisus le-a spus: Fiul Omului va sa fie dat in mainile oamenilor. Si-L vor omori, dar a



*"Porunca noua dău voua: Sa va iubiti unul pe altul. Precum Eu v-am iubit pe voi, asa si voi sa va iubiti unul pe altul. Intru aceasta vor cunoaste toti oamenii ca sunteti ucenicii Mei, daca veti avea dragoste unii fata de altii" (Ioan 13:34-35)*

*"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)*

*"I AM The Gate; if anyone will enter by me, he shall live and shall go in and out and shall find the pasture." (John 10:9)*

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*treia zi va invia. Si ei s-au intristat foarte!" (Matei 17, 14-23).*

### Gospel after Matthew 17:14-23

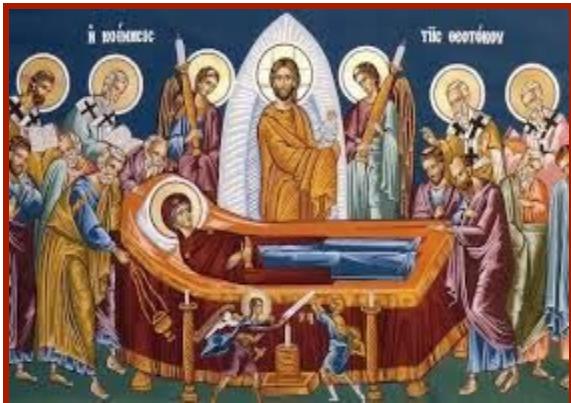
*When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. "Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him."*

*"You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.*

*Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"*

*He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

### **Cinstita mutare a Preaslavitei, Stapaniei noastre, Nascatoare de Dumnezeu si pururea Fecioarei Maria**



*Maica Domnului este cea mai inalta sfintenie omeneasca cunoscuta si cinstita de Sfanta Biserică, iar Adormirea Maicii Domnului este cea mai de seama dintre sarbatorile ei. Este o sarbatoare pregatita, precum se stie, printr-un post de doua saptamani.*



### **Programul Liturgic**

#### **Duminica, 13 august**

**8:30 AM Slujba Utreniei**

**9:30 AM Sfanta Liturghie**

#### **Luni, 14 august**

**6:00 PM Vecernia si Prohodul Adormirii Maicii Domnului cu procesiunea in jurul bisericii**

#### **Marti, 15 august**

**(+)Adormirea Maicii Domnului**

**9:30 AM Utrenia Praznicului**

**10:00 AM Sfanta Liturghie**

#### **Sambata, 19 august**

**6:00 PM Slujba Vecerniei**

#### **Duminica, 20 august**

**8:30 AM Slujba Utreniei**

**9:30 AM Sfanta Liturghie**

**12:00PM Masa pt Praznicul Adormirii Maicii Domnului**

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*Cand a binevoit Hristos, Dumnezeul nostru, sa ia la Sine pe Maica Sa, atunci cu trei zile mai inainte, a facut-o sa cunoasca, printr-un inger, mutarea ei de pe pamant la viata cea cereasca. Deci, instiintandu-se Nascatoarea de Dumnezeu despre aceasta, s-a bucurat, cu bucurie mare, si s-a suit degraba in Muntele Maslinilor, ca sa se roage.*

*S-a intors, apoi, acasa si a pregatit toate cele de ingropare, incredintand pe cei din jur ca mutandu-se in ceruri, nu ii va uita, si pe toata lumea o va cerceta si o va ocroti. Si a impartit vaduvelor sarace vesmintele sale. Si a luat, apoi, iertaciune de la toti si, culcandu-se pe pat, a facut rugaciune pentru intarirea lumii si pentru vietuirea in pace. Si, binecuvantand pe toti cei de fata, si-a dat sufletul in mainile Fiului si Dumnezeului ei. Si multe vindecari s-au impartit tuturor celor bolnavi, prin binecuvantarea ei.*

*Si, s-a facut, atunci, tunet mare si au venit de la marginile lumii, ca pe niste nori, toti Apostolii lui Hristos, la casa Maicii Domnului din Ierusalim. Si, incepand Petru cantarea cea de ingropare, Apostolii au ridicat patul si au petrecut, pana la mormant, trupul cel primitor de Dumnezeu. Si, sosind in satul Ghetsimani si asezand in mormant trupul Maicii Domnului, Apostolii au zabolit, acolo, inca trei zile, asteptand pe Apostolul Toma, care din dumnezeiasca randuiala, lipsea.*

*Si, sosind, Toma Apostolul era intristat, ca nu se invrednicise sa vada, si el, chipul adormit al Maicii Domnului, ca si ceilaliti Apostoli. Deci, s-a deschis, cu hotarare de obste, mormantul, pentru el. Si, daca s-a deschis, s-au minunat, ca au aflat mormantul fara sfantul ei trup si era numai giulgiul lasat, ca mangaiere si marturie nemincinoasa a mutarii Nascatoarei de Dumnezeu, cu trup cu tot, la ceruri.*

*Pe scurt, dupa credinta Sfintei Biserici, la Adormirea Maicii Domnului, trupul ei n-a cunoscut putrezirea, care vine dupa moarte, nici n-a ramas in mormant. Maica Domnului, cu trupul schimbant, viu si proslavit, a fost mutata,*



**The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary:**

After the Ascension of the Lord, the Mother of God remained in the care of the Apostle John the Theologian, and during his journeys She lived at the home of his parents, near the Mount of Olives. She was a source of consolation and edification both for the Apostles and for all the believers.

The reverence of the Apostles for the Most Holy Virgin was extraordinary. After the receiving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles remained at Jerusalem for about ten years attending to the salvation of the Jews, and wanting moreover to see the Mother of God and hear Her holy discourse. Many of the newly-enlightened in the Faith even came from faraway lands to Jerusalem, to see and to hear the All-Pure Mother of God.

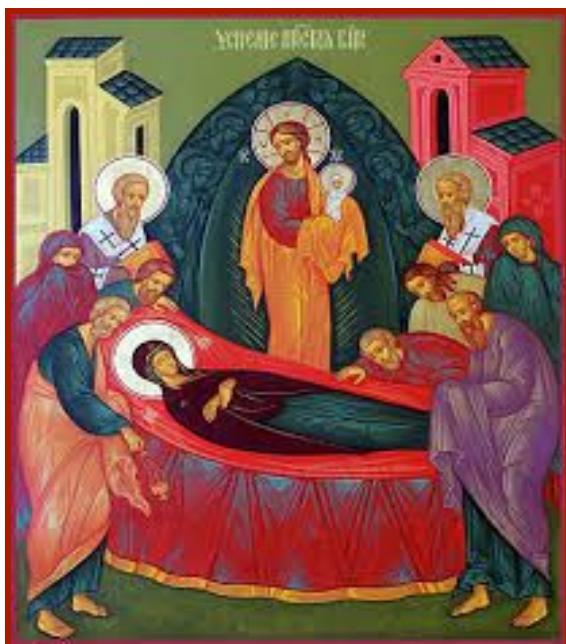
During the persecution initiated by King Herod against the young Church of Christ (Acts 12:1-3), the Most Holy Virgin and the Apostle John the Theologian withdrew to Ephesus in the year 43. The preaching of the Gospel there had fallen by lot to the Apostle John the Theologian. The Mother of God was on Cyprus with Saint Lazarus the Four-Days-Dead, where he was bishop. She was also on Holy Mount Athos. Saint Stephen of the Holy Mountain says that the Mother of God prophetically spoke of it: "Let this place be my lot, given to me by my Son and my God. I will be the Patroness of this place and intercede with God for it."

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*cu trup cu tot la ceruri, ca o parga a intregii omeniri, si acolo se roaga de-a pururi pentru noi. Sa avem mare incredere in rugaciunea ei, ca ea singura poate vorbi lui Dumnezeu, ca o mama unui fiu al ei. Dumnezeului nostru slava!(Prolooge)*



### Cuvant la Adormirea Maicii Domnului

Dupa Invierea si Inaltarea lui Hristos la cer, Maica Domnului a ramas mangaierea si alinarea intregii Biserici. Ea se afla in mijlocul Bisericii, daruind tuturor ajutorul ei.

Sfantul Grigorie Palama mentioneaza trei slujiri si lucrari specifice ale Preasfintei noastre Nascatoare de Dumnezeu.

In primul rand, cunoastem ca marirea ei, care s-a implinit prin Nasterea Fiului si Cuvantului lui Dumnezeu, era mai presus de „*nevointa cea mai plina de ravna si care se putea lucra in multe chipuri*”. Dar Preasfanta Fecioara, cu toate ca dobandise mare har de la Dumnezeu, a dus o viata de aspra nevointa dupa Inaltarea lui Hristos la ceruri.

In al doilea rand, se ruga pentru toata lumea si se ingrijea de feluritele nevoi ale acesteia. Mentioneaza

According to Tradition, based on the words of the Hieromartyrs Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3), Ignatius the God-Bearer (December 20), Saint Ambrose of Milan (December 7) had occasion to write in his work “On Virgins” concerning the Mother of God: “She was a Virgin not only in body, but also in soul, humble of heart, circumspect in word, wise in mind, not overly given to speaking, a lover of reading and of work, and prudent in speech. Her rule of life was to offend no one, to intend good for everyone, to respect the aged, not envy others, avoid bragging, be healthy of mind, and to love virtue.” When did She ever hurl the least insult in the face of Her parents? When was She at discord with Her kin? When did She ever puff up with pride before a modest person, or laugh at the weak, or shun the destitute? With Her there was nothing of glaring eyes, nothing of unseemly words, nor of improper conduct. She was modest in the movement of Her body, Her step was quiet, and Her voice straightforward; so that Her face was an expression of soul. She was the personification of purity.

All Her days She was concerned with fasting: She slept only when necessary, and even then, when Her body was at rest, She was still alert in spirit, repeating in Her dreams what She had read, or the implementation of proposed intentions, or those planned yet anew. She was out of Her house only for church, and then only in the company of relatives. Otherwise, She seldom appeared outside Her house in the company of others, and She was Her own best overseer. Others could protect Her only in body, but She Herself guarded Her character.”

The circumstances of the Dormition of the Mother of God were known in the Orthodox Church from apostolic times. Already in the first century, the Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite wrote about Her “Falling-Asleep.” In the second century, the account of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven is found in the works of Meliton, Bishop of Sardis. In the fourth century, Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus refers to the tradition about the “Falling Asleep” of the Mother of God. In the fifth century, Saint Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, told the holy Byzantine Empress Pulcheria: “Although there is no account of the circumstances of Her death in Holy Scripture, we know about them from the most ancient and credible Tradition.” This tradition was gathered and expounded in the Church

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in acest sens Sfantul Grigorie: „... *prin rugaciunile ei grabnice pentru toata lumea deopotrivă*”.

In al treilea rand, Maica Domnului era sprijinul si mangaierea Sfintilor Apostoli care propovaduiau Evanghelia la toata zidirea. Este foarte insemnat acest aspect al ajutorului dat de Maica Domnului, la care, in mod obisnuit, nu se face referire, deoarece este vadit lucru ca isihia si tacerea pe care le-a ales Maica Domnului pentru restul vietii sale in Biserica reprezentau sprijin pentru „lucrarea” duhovniceasca si pentru propovaduirea Evangheliei. Si scrie Sfantul Grigorie: „*prin indemnurile si povetale ei catre dumnezeiestii propovaduitorii care mergeau pana la marginile lumii, Maica Domnului era sprijin si mangaiere pentru toti, fiind vazuta, si auzita, si impreuna-lucrand in orice chip la propovaduirea Evangheliei*” (Sfantul Grigorie Palama, Omilia 37, 5).

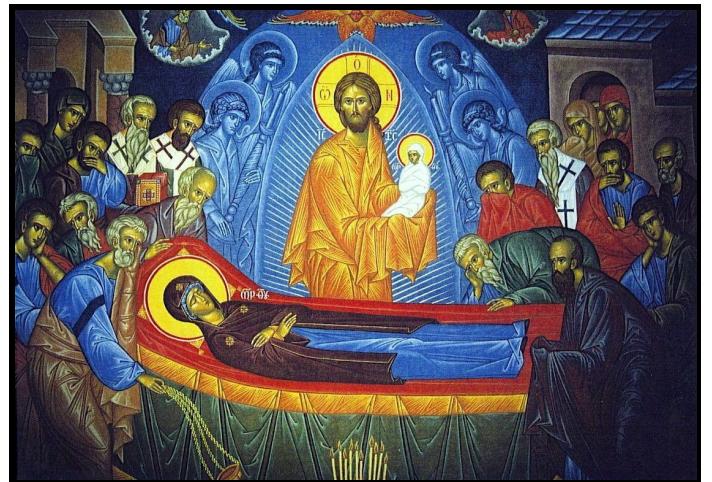
Evenimentul Adormirii Preasfintei Nascatoare de Dumnezeu este binecunoscut. Adormirea ei a fost slavita si preamarita, asa cum i-a fost si viata. Pentru ca, pe cat de slavita este viata pamanteasca a omului, pe atat va fi si sfarsitul lui.

Sfantul Grigorie Palama, la inceputul cuvantului lui despre Adormirea Maicii Domnului spune ca mai mult decat orice iubeste si este dator „*sa binevesteasca Bisericii slava si pururea-fecioria Maicii Domnului*” (Sfantul Grigorie Palama, Omilia 37, 1), iar apoi ne cere sa luam aminte la faptul ca, daca moartea cuviosilor este cinstita si pomenirea dreptilor cu laude se savarseste, mult mai mult trebuie sa se implineasca acest lucru pentru Maica Domnului care este Sfanta Sfintelor si prin care vine sfintirea Sfintilor.

Sfantul Grigorie Palama, vorbind despre Adormirea Nascatoarei de Dumnezeu, nu doar ca o numeste „slavita”, ci arata ca este „mutare la viata”: „... *praznuind astazi aceasta adormire, mutarea ei la viata*”. Moartea ei este purtatoare-de-viata „*in ceruri si calauzitoare catre viata nemuritoare*”.

Aceasta „mutare la viata” este invierea si inaltarea cu trupul la cer a Preasfintei Nascatoare de Dumnezeu. Potrivit invataturii Sfantului Grigorie Palama, dar si a altor Sfinți, nu praznuim doar ridicarea la cer a sufletului Maicii Domnului, ci si a trupului ei. Sfantul Grigorie scrie ca Nascatoarea de Dumnezeu s-a mutat

**History of Nicephorus Callistus during the fourteenth century.**



**At the time of Her blessed Falling Asleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was again at Jerusalem. Her fame as the Mother of God had already spread throughout the land and had aroused many of the envious and the spiteful against Her. They wanted to make attempts on Her life; but God preserved Her from enemies.**

**Day and night She spent her time in prayer. The Most Holy Theotokos went often to the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and here She offered up fervent prayer. More than once, enemies of the Savior sought to hinder Her from visiting her holy place, and they asked the High Priest for a guard to watch over the Grave of the Lord. The Holy Virgin continued to pray right in front of them, yet unseen by anyone.**

**In one such visit to Golgotha, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Her and announced Her approaching departure from this life to eternal life. In pledge of this, the Archangel gave Her a palm branch. With these heavenly tidings the Mother of God returned to Bethlehem with the three girls attending Her (Sephora, Abigail, and Jael). She summoned Righteous Joseph of Arimathea and other disciples of the Lord, and told them of Her impending Repose.**

**The Most Holy Virgin prayed also that the Lord would have the Apostle John come to Her. The Holy Spirit transported him from Ephesus, setting him in that very place where the**

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la cer in „*Imparatia ce i se cuvenea*” si a sezut de-a dreapta Imperatului a toate „*in haina aurita si prea infrumusetata*” (Ps. 44, 11). „Haina aurita” inseamna „*trupul ei luminat de lumina dumnezeiasca*”, iar „*prea infrumusetata*” arata impodobirea ei „*prin toate virtutile*”. Astfel, cu trupul s-a suit la Cer si este singura care si cu trupul se afla la cer alaturi de Fiul ei. „*Singura, ea, acum cu trupul proslavit de Dumnezeu se afla in cer impreuna cu Fiul ei*”.

Talculind acest pasaj, spune ca mormantul si moartea nu au putut sa tina trupul ei incepator-de-viata si datator-de-viata, care este este iubit salas al cerului cerurilor. Daca un suflet care a primit dumnezeiescul har, dupa iesirea din trup se ridica la cer, cu atat mai mult Maica Domnului s-a ridicat la cer si cu trupul, ea, care a primit in trupul ei pe Fiul lui Dumnezeu cel mai-inainte-de-veci si Unul Nascut, Care este izvorul vesnic al harului, si nu doar ca L-a primit inlauntrul ei, dar L-a si nascut.

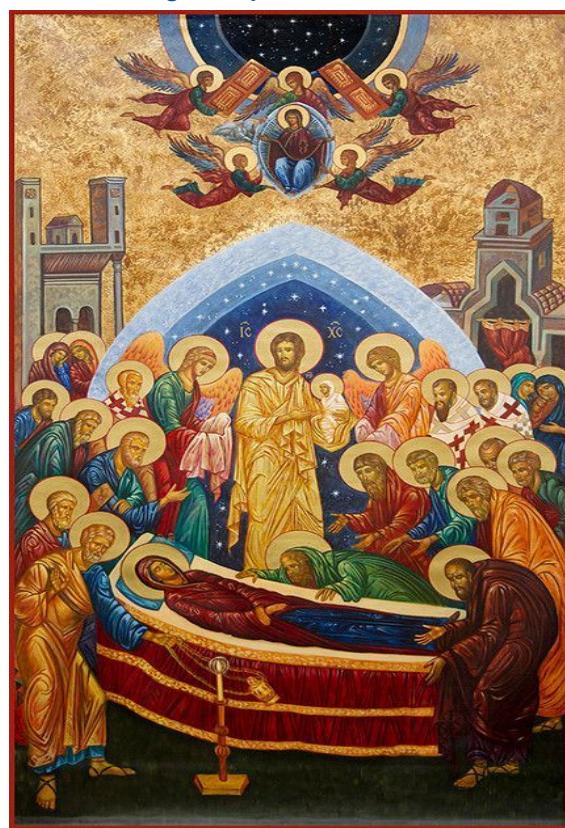
Astfel, vorbim despre invierea si inaltarea cu trupul la cer a Maicii Domnului. Cu alte cuvinte, Preasfanta Nascatoare de Dumnezeu se afla cu trupul in ceruri. Si Sfantul scrie: „*Pentru aceasta, trupul care [L]-a nascut [pe Dumnezeu] este cu indreptatire impreuna-slavit cu o slava vrednica de Dumnezeu*” (Sfantul Grigorie Palama, Omilia 37, 9). Intocmai cum Fiul ei, Care a luat trup din ea, nu a putut ramane pe pamant, ci S-a inaltat la cer, la fel s-a petrecut si cu Maica Domnului. „*Pentru aceasta, a fost inaltata din mormant de-a dreptul mai presus de ceruri*” (Sfantul Grigorie Palama, Omilia 37, 9).

Astfel, prin inaltarea ei, le-a unit pe cele de jos cu cele de sus. Trebuia ca si Nascatoarea de Dumnezeu, care a incaput intru sine pe Cel Ce toate le umple, sa fie mai presus de toate si sa le depaseasca pe toate prin virtutile ei. Faptul ca este mai presus de toate si mai inalta decat toti Sfintii si decat toti ingerii se vadeste in faptul inaltarii ei cu trupul la ceruri. Se vadeste, adica, din faptul ca „*dupa moarte a devenit nemuritoare si ca ea singura salasluieste cu trupul in ceruri alaturi de Fiul si Dumnezeul ei, si de acolo revarsa din balsug harul celor care sunt vrednici de el...*” (Sfantul Grigorie Palama, Omilia 37, 11).

Invatatura aceasta a Sfantului Grigorie Palama despre invierea si inaltarea Nascatoarei de Dumnezeu cu

Mother of God lay. After the prayer, the Most Holy Virgin offered incense, and John heard a voice from Heaven, closing Her prayer with the word “Amen.” The Mother of God took it that the voice meant the speedy arrival of the Apostles and the Disciples and the holy Bodiless Powers.

The faithful, whose number by then was impossible to count, gathered together, says Saint John of Damascus, like clouds and eagles, to listen to the Mother of God. Seeing one another, the Disciples rejoiced, but in their confusion they asked each other why the Lord had gathered them together in one place. Saint John the Theologian, greeting them with tears of joy, said that the time of the Virgin’s repose was at hand.



Going in to the Mother of God, they beheld Her lying upon the bed, and filled with spiritual joy. The Disciples greeted Her, and then they told her how they had been carried miraculously from their places of preaching. The Most Holy Virgin Mary glorified God, because He had heard Her prayer and fulfilled Her heart’s desire, and She began speaking about Her imminent end.

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trupul la cer – care s-a petrecut prin harul si lucrarea Fiului ei – reprezinta invatatura Bisericii. Sfantul Nicodim Aghioritul a selectat pasaje din scirerile Sfintilor Parinti, atat din invatatura lor, cat si din troparele pe care le-au compus – din cele ale Sfantului Cosma Melodul, ale Sfantului Andrei Criteanul, ale Sfantului Marcu Eugenicul –, precum si alte tropare in care se pune in lumina invatatura Bisericii ca mutarea la ceruri a Nascatoarei de Dumnezeu inseamna ridicarea sufletului la cer, dar si invierea si inaltarea trupului ei, prin urmare, “*Preasfanta Nascatoare de Dumnezeu se afla deplin cu trupul la cer*”.

Poate parea provocator acest cuvant al Sfantului Grigorie Palama ca doar Maica Domnului se afla in cer cu trupul alaturi de Hristos, daca ne gandim la faptul ca Prorocul Ilie a fost rapit cu trupul la cer, fapt cunoscut din Sfanta Scriptura. Insa Sfantul Grigorie Palama talcuieste minunat si acest lucru. Vorbind despre Inaltarea lui Hristos si mai ales despre faptul ca, desi exista mai multe inaltari, totusi Inaltarea lui Hristos este unica, Sfantul Grigorie Palama se refera si la cazul Prorocului Ilie. Si scrie: „*Dar [Prorocul Ilie] nu a depasit hotarele intinderii care inconjoara pamantul; inaltarea fiecaruia dintre acestia a fost o ridicare de la pamant fara insa a iesi din imprejurimile pamantului*”. Din aceasta talciuire se arata ca inaltarea Prorocului Ilie a fost, intr-un anume fel, o mutare din loc, am putea spune ca a fost un fel de moarte, si, fireste, prin inaltarea lui nu a depasit limitele atmosferei din jurul pamantului. De aceea, [dintre oameni] doar Preasfanta Nascatoare de Dumnezeu a inviat si s-a inaltat cu trupul la cer si este proslavita dimpreuna cu Fiul ei, ca Maica a Lui dupa firea omeneasca.

(Inaltreasfintitul Ierotheos Vlachos)

**During this conversation the Apostle Paul also appeared in a miraculous manner together with his disciples Dionysius the Areopagite, Saint Hierotheus, Saint Timothy and others of the Seventy Apostles. The Holy Spirit had gathered them all together so that they might be granted the blessing of the All-Pure Virgin Mary, and more fittingly to see to the burial of the Mother of the Lord. She called each of them to Herself by name, She blessed them and extolled them for their faith and the hardships they endured in preaching the Gospel of Christ. To each She wished eternal bliss, and prayed with them for the peace and welfare of the whole world.**

**Then came the third hour (9 A.M.), when the Dormition of the Mother of God was to occur. A number of candles were burning. The holy Disciples surrounded her beautifully adorned bed, offering praise to God. She prayed in anticipation of Her demise and of the arrival of Her longed-for Son and Lord. Suddenly, the inexpressible Light of Divine Glory shone forth, before which the blazing candles paled in comparison. All who saw it took fright. Descending from Heaven was Christ, the King of Glory, surrounded by hosts of Angels and Archangels and other Heavenly Powers, together with the souls of the Forefathers and the Prophets, who had prophesied in ages past concerning the Most Holy Virgin Mary.**

**Seeing Her Son, the Mother of God exclaimed: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God My Savior, for He hath regarded the low estate of His Handmaiden” (Luke 1:46-48) and, rising from Her bed to meet the Lord, She bowed down to Him, and the Lord bid Her enter into Life Eternal. Without any bodily suffering, as though in a happy sleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary gave Her soul into the hands of Her Son and God.**

**Then began a joyous angelic song. Accompanying the pure soul of the God-betrothed and with reverent awe for the Queen of Heaven, the angels exclaimed: “Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee, blessed art Thou among women! For lo, the Queen, God’s Maiden comes, lift up the gates, and with the Ever-Existing One, take up the Mother of Light; for through Her salvation has come to all the human race. It is impossible to gaze upon Her, and it is impossible to render Her due honor” (Stikherion on “Lord, I Have Cried”). The Heavenly gates were raised, and meeting the soul of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Cherubim and the Seraphim glorified Her with joy. The face of the Mother**

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**Pr. Cleopa despre cinstirea Maicii Domnului**

Dintre toti sfintii, pe care trebuie sa-i cinstiti, sa cinstiti mai tare pe Maica Domnului ! Auziti cum lauda Biserica pe Maica Domnului? Scaun de Heruvimi, Fecioara. Ai auzit axionul Marelui Vasile ? Ati auzit " ca pantecele tau mai desfatat decat cerul a lucrat!" Comoara si vistieria tuturor darurilor Duhului Sfant a fost Maica Domnului !

Prin Maica Domnului, Dumnezeu S-a pogorat pana la noi si firea noastra s-a ridicat pana de-a dreapta maririi intru cele inalte, pana de-a dreapta lui Dumnezeu-Tatal. Firea cu care este imbracat Hristos astazi, adica firea omeneasca fara de pacat, a luat-o din preacuratele sangiuri ale Maicii Domnului.

Iata, ea este scara lui Iacob pe care, ai vazut, se pogorau si se suiau ingerii lui Dumnezeu, pe care a vazut-o Iacob cand dormea, cand mergea spre Laban Sirianul. Ca Dumnezeu S-a pogorat pe aceasta scara prin intrupare pana la noi, S-a intrupat de la Duhul Sfant si din preacuratele sangiuri ale Fecioarei Maria si a ridicat firea noastra pana de-a dreapta maririi intru cele inalte, de unde era cazuta toata firea lui Adam in fundul iadului, cu toti patriarhii si proorocii.

Sa aveti mare evlavie, fratilor, la Fecioara Maria si fericita este casa si familia aceea care are in casa icoana Maicii Domnului si in fiecare dimineata ii citeste Acatistul si cinstitul ei Paraclis si toti stiu rugaciuni catre Maica Domnului.

Mult pot si sfintii lui Dumnezeu, dar nici unul cat Maica Domnului. Daca nu era Maica Domnului in ceruri, intre Sfanta Treime si noi, lumea asta se pierdea de mult. Ea pururea sta in genunchi si se roaga Preasfintei Treimi.

Ea este a patra fata duhovniceasca din ceruri. Intai este Tatal, Fiul si Duhul Sfant, adica Sfanta Treime, apoi a patra este Maica Domnului.

of God was radiant with the glory of Divine virginity, and from Her body there came a sweet fragrance.

Miraculous was the life of the All-Pure Virgin, and wondrous was Her Repose, as Holy Church sings: "In Thee, O Queen, the God of all hath given thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. Just as in the Birth-Giving He did preserve Thine virginity, so also in the grave He did preserve Thy body from decay" (Canon 1, Ode 6, Troparion 1).

Kissing the all-pure body with reverence and in awe, the Disciples in turn were blessed by it and filled with grace and spiritual joy. Through the great glorification of the Most Holy Theotokos, the almighty power of God healed the sick, who with faith and love touched the holy bed.

Bewailing their separation from the Mother of God, the Apostles prepared to bury Her all-pure body. The holy Apostles Peter, Paul, James and others of the Twelve Apostles carried the funeral bier upon their shoulders, and upon it lay the body of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Saint John the Theologian went at the head with the resplendent palm-branch from Paradise. The other saints and a multitude of the faithful accompanied the funeral bier with candles and censers, singing sacred songs. This solemn procession went from Sion through Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane.

With the start of the procession there suddenly appeared over the all-pure body of the Mother of God and all those accompanying Her a resplendent circular cloud, like a crown. There was heard the singing of the Heavenly Powers, glorifying the Mother of God, which echoed that of the worldly voices. This circle of Heavenly singers and radiance accompanied the procession to the very place of burial.

Unbelieving inhabitants of Jerusalem, taken aback by the extraordinarily grand funeral procession and vexed at the honor accorded the Mother of Jesus, complained of this to the High Priest and scribes. Burning with envy and vengefulness toward everything that reminded them of Christ, they sent out their own servants to disrupt the procession and to set the body of the Mother of God afire. An angry crowd and soldiers set off against the Christians, but the circular cloud accompanying the procession descended and surrounded them like a wall. The pursuers

## HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL, ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH SACRAMENTO

4633 Raley Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95838

13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a dupa Rusalii (Vindecarea lunaticului)

Auziti cum canta Biserica : Ceea ce esti mai cinstita decat heruvimii si mai marita fara de asemanare decat serafimii... Ati auzit ?



De ce ? Ea a purtat in pantecele ei pe cel ce a zidit serafimii si heruvimii din nefiinta. Ea n-a purtat un sfant in pantecele ei; ci pe Fiul lui Dumnezeu, pe Cel ce a facut heruvimii si serafimii numai cu gandirea, pe care L-a purtat in pantecele ei. Si ea n-are impartasire de

Dumnezeu cu participare, cum au heruvimii sau serafimii sau preafericitele tronuri. Dumnezeu se odihneste pe tronuri cu darul, nu cu fiinta. Iar in preacuratele sangiuri, adica in pantecele Maicii Domnului si in bratele ei preasfinte, Dumnezeu nu se odihneste cu darul, ci cu fiinta. Toata dumnezeirea S-a unit cu toata omenirea din preacuratele sangiuri ale Maicii Domnului !

Pentru ca Cel ce era in bratele ei nu era numai om, era Dumnezeu desavarsit si Om desavarsit. De aceea Biserica intlege ca "...pantecele tau s-a facut mai desfatat decat toate cerurile". Dumnezeu nu incape in toate cerurile, ca nu-L cuprinde nici o fiinta dar a incaput in pantecele Preacuratei Fecioare.

Stiti voi cine-i Maica Domnului ?

Ea este Imparateasa Heruvimilor, imparateasa a toata faptura; camara intruparii lui Dumnezeu Cuvantul ! Usa Lumini, ca lumina cea neapropiata ganditoare prin ea a venit in lume. Usa vietii, ca Viata Hristos prin ea a intrat !

Poarta cea incuiata prin care n-a trecut nimeni decat Domnul, cum spune Proorocul Iezuchiel (cap. 44, 2).

Scara catre cer, pod catre cer; porumbita care a incetat pierderea sau potopul pacatelor, precum porumbila lui Noe a adeverit incetarea potopului. Cadelnita dumnezeiasca, ca a primit focul dumnezeirii si Biserica a Preasfantului Duh.

Cine este Maica Domnului ?

Este Mireasa Tatalui, Maica Cuvantului, si Biserica Duhului Sfant.

Stiti voi cine-i Maica Domnului ?

Cand auzi un blestemat de sectar ca nu crede in Maica Domnului, fugi, ca acesta este fiu al iadului. Vor vedea in ziua judecatii ceea ce spune la Psalmul 44 : De fata a statut imparateasa de-a dreapta Ta, imbracata in haina aurita si prea infrumusetata ( vers. 11 ).

heard the footsteps and the singing, but could not see any of those accompanying the procession. Indeed, many of them were struck blind.

The Jewish priest Athonios, out of spite and hatred for the Mother of Jesus of Nazareth, wanted to topple the funeral bier on which lay the body of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, but an angel of God invisibly cut off his hands, which had touched the bier. Seeing such a wonder, Athonios repented and with faith confessed the majesty of the Mother of God. He received healing and joined the crowd accompanying the body of the Mother of God, and he became a zealous follower of Christ.

When the procession reached the Garden of Gethsemane, then amidst the weeping and the wailing began the last kiss to the all-pure body. Only towards evening were the Apostles able to place it in the tomb and seal the entrance to the cave with a large stone.

For three days they did not depart from the place of burial, praying and chanting Psalms. Through the wise providence of God, the Apostle Thomas was not to be present at the burial of the Mother of God. Arriving late on the third day at Gethsemane, he lay down at the tomb and with bitter tears asked that he might be permitted to look once more upon the Mother of God and bid her farewell. The Apostles out of heartfelt pity for him decided to open the grave and permit him the comfort of venerating the holy relics of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Having opened the grave, they found in it only the grave wrappings and were thus convinced of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven.

On the evening of the same day, when the Apostles had gathered at a house to strengthen themselves with food, the Mother of God appeared to them and said: "Rejoice! I am with you all the days of your lives." This so gladdened the Apostles and everyone with them, that they took a portion of the bread, set aside at the meal in memory of the Savior ("the Lord's Portion"), and they exclaimed : "Most Holy Theotokos, save us". (This marks the beginning of the rite of offering up the "Panagia" ("All-Holy"), a portion of bread in honor of the Mother of God, which is done at monasteries to the present day).

The sash of the Mother of God, and Her holy garb, preserved with reverence and distributed over the face of the earth in pieces, have worked miracles both in the past

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4633 Raley Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95838

13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a dupa Rusalii (Vindecarea Iunaticului)

*Maica lui Dumnezeu, Imparateasa cerului si a pamantului, cata mila are de cei care au crezut in ea si au laudat-o, si cata urgie are sa vina peste cei care n-au crezut in ea !*

*Ce vor face sectele care nu cred in Maica Domnului si popoarele care n-o cinstesc ? Cand ea sta de-a dreapta maririi, sta de-a dreapta Sfintei Treimi ! Si cate miliarde de suflete care au credinta si nadejde in Maica Domnului vor trece usor vazduhului si din moarte la viata, pentru ca au cinstit-o pe Maica Domnului. Deci, va rog sa nu lipseasca din casa Acatistul Maicii Domnului, Paraclisul si alte rugaciuni catre Maica Domnului ! Si la icoana ei sa arda candela permanent.*



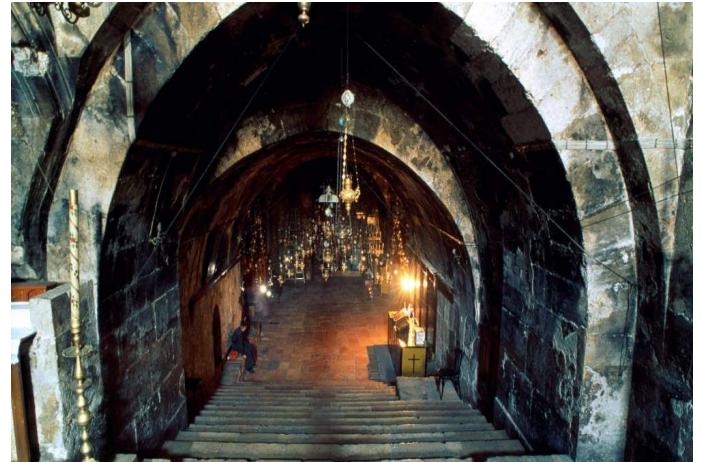
*Cand vezi icoana Maicii Domnului cu Pruncul Hristos in brate, tu stii ce vezi acolo ? Cerul si pamantul ! Cerul este Hristos, Cel mai presus de ceruri; Ziditorul cerului si al pamantului; si Maica Domnului reprezinta pamantul, adica toate popoarele de pe fata pamantului, ca ea este din neamul nostru. Este din semintie imparateasca si arhiereasca.*

*Bratele Maicii Domnului sunt mult mai puternice decat umerii heruvimilor si ale preafericitelor tronuri. Deci pe cine tine Fecioara Maria in brate ? Voi stiti pe cine tine ? Pe Cel ce a facut cerul si pamantul si toate cele vazute si nevazute.*

*Stiti voi cine este Maica Domnului si cata cinste, cata putere si cata mila are ? Este mama noastra, ca are mila si de saraci si de vaduve si de crestini. Pururea se roaga Mantuitorului Hristos pentru noi toti.*

*De cand i-a spus arhanghelul puterilor ceresti, Gavril, care venise in Nazaret la ea cu crin, cine este Cel Care se va neste, zicandu-i : Bucura-te ceea ce esti plina de har, Marie, Domnul este cu tine ( Luca 1, 28 ), ea fiind fecioara, nestiind de barbat, l-a intrebat pe arhanghel : Cum va fi aceasta sa nasc, ca eu nu stiu de barbat ? Si i-a spus chipul zamsirii, ca prin auz va fi. Duhul Sfant va veni peste tine si puterea celui Preainalt te va umbri. Pentru aceasta si Sfantul care se va neste din tine, Fiul lui Dumnezeu se va chemea ( Luca 34, 35 ).*

**and at present. Her numerous icons everywhere pour forth signs and healings, and Her holy body, taken up to Heaven, bears witness to our own future life there. Her body was not left to the vicissitudes of the transitory world, but was incomparably exalted by its glorious ascent to Heaven.**



### Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in the Gethsemane

*The Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos is celebrated with special solemnity at Gethsemane, the place of Her burial. Nowhere else is there such sorrow of heart at the separation from the Mother of God, and nowhere else such joy, because of Her intercession for the world.*

*The holy city of Jerusalem is separated from the Mount of Olives by the valley of Kedron on Josaphat. At the foot of the Mount of Olives is the Garden of Gethsemane, where olive trees bear fruit even now.*

*The holy Ancestor-of-God Joachim had himself reposed at 80 years of age, several years after the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple (November 21). Saint Anna, having been left a widow, moved from Nazareth to Jerusalem, and lived near the Temple. At Jerusalem she bought two pieces of property: the first at the gates of Gethsemane, and the second in the valley of Josaphat. At the second locale she built a tomb for the members of her family, and where also she herself was buried with Joachim. It was there in the Garden of Gethsemane that the Savior often prayed with His disciples.*

*The most-pure body of the Mother of God was buried in the family tomb. Christians honored the sepulchre of the Mother of God, and they built a church on this spot. Within the church was preserved the precious funeral cloth, which covered Her all-pure and fragrant body.*

## HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL, ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH SACRAMENTO

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13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a dupa Rusalii (Vindecarea lunaticului)

Ea s-a umplut de toate darurile Duhului Sfant devenind camara. Daca un om credincios intelege tainete mari dumnezeiesti, cu atat mai mult Maica Domnului. Ea si-a dat seama ca este camara lui Dumnezeu-Cuvantul. Si ganditi-vă, cand îl purta în brate pe Hristos și-l alapta, să sugă laptele de la ea : " Pe cine m-am invrednicit eu să nasc și să port în brate ? " De aceea ea s-a numit " roaba " (Luca 1, 38).

Iata cat har avea Maica Domnului ! Si fecioria, ca era de neam imparatesc, al lui David, si arhieresc, al lui Aaron, si nu facea nimic, daca nu era smerita. Cand a vazut ce misiune are ea pe pamant, i-a spus ingerului : Iata roaba Domnului. Fie mie dupa cuvantul tau ! S-a numit " roaba ". Dar a prorocit, cand s-a dus ea la Ierusalim : Iata, de acum ma vor ferici toate neamurile ! (Luca 1, 48) Ea isi dadea seama. A devenit maica dupa trup a lui Dumnezeu-Cuvantul. " Toate popoarele si ingerii si heruvimii, toate ma vor slavi de-acum. Asa a voit Dumnezeu sa ma aleaga din toate fecioarele de pe fata pamantului ..

Si atunci, cum Spune istoria, cand Mantuitorul era mic, ea il alapta, il punea intr-o fasa curata, alba si incepea a face sute de metanii la El si-l saruta piciorutele. Ca ea isi dadea seama : " Acesta pe care îl vezi prunc, este Dumnezeu cel mai inainte de veci „, cum canta Biserica : Fecioara astazi, pe Cel mai presus de fiinta naste si pamantul pestera, Celui neapropiat aduce. Ingerii cu pastorii slavoslovesc si magii cu steaua calatoresc, ca pentru noi S-a nascut Prunc tanar, Dumnezeu cel mai inainte de veci. Iși dadea seama pe cine naste si pe cine poarta in brate.

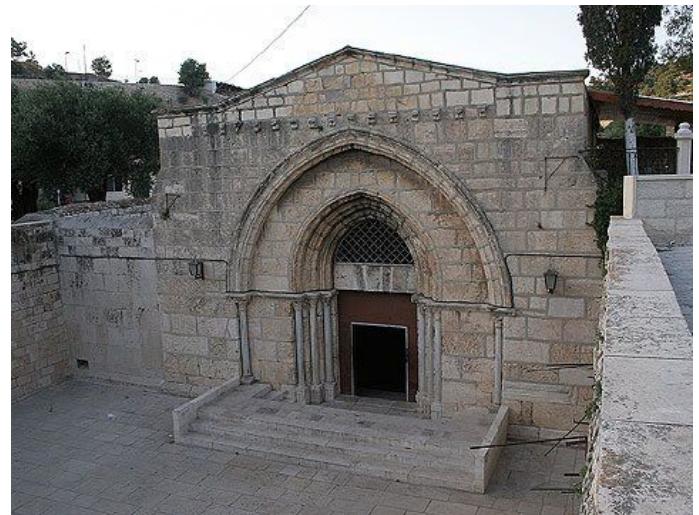


### ON FASTING

Man is dear to the Lord, the whole world is obedient to him. The Son of God Himself came down from heaven on earth to save him from everlasting torments, to reconcile him with God. All fruits, the various flesh of animals, were given to him for food, and various drinks were given to him to please his taste — but not to excite his passions, not for his only enjoyment, for the Christian has great, spiritual, Divine enjoyments. Carnal delights must be always made subject to these higher ones; they must be restrained or completely

The holy Patriarch Juvenal of Jerusalem (420-458) testified before the emperor Marcian (450-457) as to the authenticity of the tradition about the miraculous ascent of the Mother of God to Heaven, and he sent to the empress, Saint Pulcheria (September 10), the grave wrappings of the Mother of God from Her tomb. Saint Pulcheria then placed these grave-wrappings within the Blachernae church.

Accounts have been preserved, that at the end of the seventh century a church had been built atop the underground church of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, and that from its high bell-tower could be seen the dome of the Church of the Resurrection of the Lord. Traces of this church are no longer to be seen. And in the ninth century near the subterranean Gethsemane church a monastery was built, in which more than 30 monks struggled.



Great destruction was done the Church in the year 1009 by the despoiler of the holy places, Hakim. Radical changes, the traces of which remain at present, also took place under the crusaders in the year 1130. During the eleventh to twelfth centuries the piece of excavated stone, at which the Savior had prayed on the night of His betrayal disappeared from Jerusalem. This piece of stone had been in the Gethsemane basilica from the sixth century.

But in spite of the destruction and the changes, the overall original cruciform (cross-shaped) plan of the church has been preserved. At the entrance to the church along the sides of the iron gates stand four marble columns. To enter the church, it is necessary to go down a stairway of 48 steps. At the 23rd step on the right side is a chapel in honor of the holy Ancestors-of-God Joachim and Anna together with their graves, and on the left side opposite, the chapel of Saint Joseph the Betrothed with his grave. The right chapel belongs to the Orthodox Church, and the left to the Armenian Church (since 1814).

The church of the Dormition of the Theotokos has the following dimensions: in length it is 48 arshin, and in breadth 8 arshin [1 arshin = 28 inches]. At an earlier time the church had also windows

## HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL, ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH SACRAMENTO

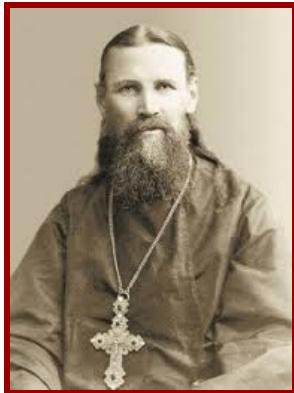
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13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a dupa Rusalii (Vindecarea lunaticului)

suppressed when they hinder spiritual delights. This signifies that it is not to afflict man that food and drink are temporarily forbidden him by the Church, not to limit his freedom, as worldly people say, but it is done in order to afford him true, lasting, and eternal delights; therefore meat or flesh food, and wine and spirits, are forbidden (during Lent), especially by reason of the fact that man is very dear to God, and in order that his heart should cling to God alone, and not to anything perishable, unworthy of him. But man, perverted by sins, easily attaches himself to earthly pleasures, forgetting that his true enjoyment, his true life, is the eternal God, and not the pleasant excitation of the flesh.

I thank my all holy, all merciful, and most wise Mother, the Church of God, for salutary guiding me during this temporal life, and for educating me for the heavenly citizenship; I thank her for all the offices of prayers, for the Divine services, for the sacraments and rites; I thank her for the fasts so beneficial to me both in spiritual and bodily respects (for through them I am healthy both in spirit and body, calm, vigilant, and light; without the fasts I should feel extreme heaviness, which I indeed experienced when not fasting)

The carnal man considers the Christian's freedom as slavery; for instance, attending Divine service, fasting, preparation for the Sacrament, confession, communion, all the Sacraments, and does not know that all this is a requirement of his nature, a necessity for his spirit.



*beside the doors. The whole temple was adorned with a multitude of lampadas and offerings. Two small entrances lead into the burial-chamber of the Mother of God. One enters through the western doors, and exits at the northern doors. The burial-chamber of the All-Pure Virgin Mary is veiled with precious curtains. The burial place was hewn out of stone in the manner of the ancient Jewish graves and is very similar to the Sepulchre of the Lord. Beyond the burial-chamber is the altar of the church, in which Divine Liturgy is celebrated each day in the Greek language.*

*The olive woods on the eastern and northern sides of the temple was acquired from the Turks by the Orthodox during the seventh and eighth centuries. The Catholics acquired the olive woods on the east and south sides in 1803, and the Armenians on the west side in 1821.*

*On August 12, at Little Gethsemane, at the second hour of the night, the head of the Gethsemane church celebrates Divine Liturgy. With the end of Liturgy, at the fourth hour of the morning, he serves a short Molieben before the resplendent burial shroud, lifts it in his hands and solemnly carries it beyond the church to Gethsemane proper where the holy sepulchre of the Mother of God is situated. All the members of the Russian Spiritual Mission in Jerusalem, with the head of the Mission presiding, participate each year in the procession (called the "Litania") with the holy burial shroud of the Mother of God..*

*The rite of the Burial of the Mother of God at Gethsemane begins customarily on the morning of August 14. A multitude of people with hierarchs and clergy at the head set off from the Jerusalem Patriarchate (nearby the Church of the Resurrection of Christ) in sorrowful procession. Along the narrow alley-ways of the Holy City the funeral procession makes its way to Gethsemane. Toward the front of the procession an icon of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos is carried. Along the way, pilgrims meet the icon, kissing the image of the All-Pure Virgin Mary and lift children of various ages to the icon. After the clergy, in two rows walk the black-robed monks and nuns of the Holy City: Greeks, Roumanians, Arabs, Russians. The procession, going along for about two hours, concludes with Lamentations at the Gethsemane church. In front the altar, beyond the burial chamber of the Mother of God, is a raised-up spot, upon which rests the burial shroud of the Most Holy Mother of God among fragrant flowers and myrtle, with precious coverings.*

*"O marvelous wonder! The Fount of Life is placed in the grave, and the grave doth become the ladder to Heaven..." Here at the grave of the All-Pure Virgin, these words strike deep with their original sense and grief is dispelled by joy: "Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee, granting the world, through Thee, great mercy!"*

*Numerous pilgrims, having kissed the icon of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, following an ancient custom, then stoop down and go beneath it.*

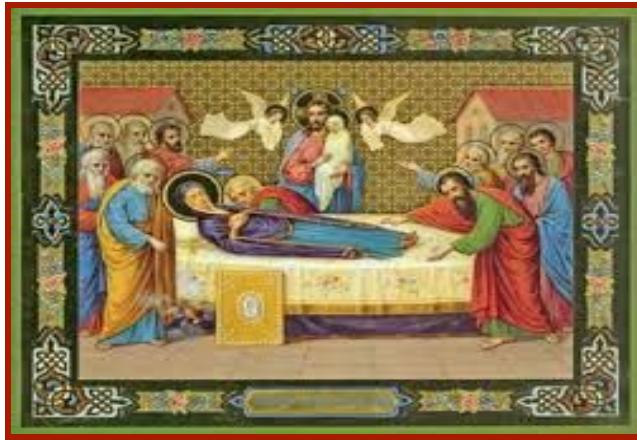
## HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL, ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH SACRAMENTO

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13 august 2017, Duminica a 10-a după Rusalii (Vindecarea Iunaticului)

(*My Life in Christ or Moments of Spiritual Serenity and Contemplation, of Reverent Feeling, of Earnest Self-Amendment, and of Peace in God, St. John of Kronstadt.*)

*On the day of the Leave-taking of the feast (August 23), another solemn procession is made. On the return path, the holy burial shroud is carried by clergy led by the Archimandrite of Gethsemane.*



### Maica Domnului sfătuiește pe Sfântul Vasile să se înfrâneze de la orice băutură



Îndată ce Prea Sfânta Maică și-a dat duhul ei preasfânt și preacurat în mâinile Fiului Său, toți orbii și toți ologii, șchiopii și bolnavii care veniseră acolo, din oraș și de pretutindeni de dimprejur, s-au făcut sănătoși!

După aceasta, dumnezeieștii apostoli, îndată ce Maica Domnului și-a dat preacuratul ei suflet, au început să audă mii și milioane de cântări îngerești în văzduh, care lăudau și cântau cântări pentru ieșirea Maicii Prea Sfântului Dumnezeu. Și au început a cânta și ei, ca și îngerii în văzduh. Și luând patul acela cu preacuratul și preasfântul trup al Maicii lui Dumnezeu, au început să călătorescă la Ghetsimani, ca să-l ducă acolo, să-l puie în mormânt. Și erau însotiti de cântările îngerești din văzduh, iar apostolii și mulțimea creștinilor și toți ucenicii lui Iisus Hristos cântau pe pământ. Și era o cântare comună a turmei celei cuvântătoare a lui Iisus Hristos de pe pământ și a celei înțelegătoare din cer, adică a îngerilor. Și petreceau și cerul, și pământul – adică și oamenii, și îngerii – pe Maica lui Dumnezeu la mormântul ei cel preasfânt. Mergând ei astfel și auzindu-se cântările și simțindu-se mireasma preasfântului trup umplând locurile pe unde treceau de bună-mireasmă, s-a trezit zavistia iudeilor; și unii dintre ei s-a dus cu mare îndrăzneală să dea jos de pe umerii apostolilor patul acela preasfânt. Ba unul dintre ei a îndrăznit chiar să se apropie și să puie mâinile pe preasfântul pat. Dar – o, minunile tale, Maica lui

„De-ji este voia să-ji fiu ajutătoare în toate nevoile tale, ascultându-te pe tine ori de câte ori te vei ruga, lasă-te de băutura vinului și de toată băutura și aşa mă vei avea pe mine grabnic ajutătoare”.

Odinioară, Preasfânta Născătoare de Dumnezeu, arătându-se Sfântului Vasile cel Mare, i-a zis: „De-ji este voia să-ji fiu prieten și să-ji fiu ajutătoare în toate nevoile tale, ascultându-te pe tine ori de câte ori te vei ruga, lasă-te de băutura vinului și de toată băutura și aşa mă vei avea pe mine grabnic ajutătoare”. Sfântul Vasile primind această poruncă de la Preasfânta Nascătoare de Dumnezeu, n-a mai băut vin și nici o altă băutură, până la moartea sa. Și aşa s-a făcut prieten Maicii Domnului și a primit ajutor de la Dânsa în multe nevoi și treburi.  
(Protosinghelul Nicodim Măndiță, *Minunile Maicii Domnului*, Editura Agapis)

### TEACHINGS ON FASTING FROM THE HOLY FATHERS

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Dumnezeu! – toți cei care voiau să dea jos năsălia de pe umerii celor care o duceau au orbit și nu mai vedea nici de unde au venit și nici unde mergeau! Iar celui care a îndrăznit – un evreu numit Antonie – să se atingă de acea preacurată năsălie pe care se afla preasfântul trup al Maiciei lui Dumnezeu, i s-au tăiat lui deodată, cu mâna îngerească nevăzută, amândouă brațele, rămânând lipite de năsălie, iar el a căzut jos leșinat și aproape mort. Și cerea iertare Maiciei lui Dumnezeu și cei orbici, și cel căruia i se tăiaseră mâinile.

Și atunci, dumnezeiescul apostol Petru, luând de pe pieptul Maiciei Domnului, de pe năsălie, ramura de finic pe care i-o aduse Arhanghelul Gavril, a pus-o pe ochii celor orbici și deodată s-au făcut sănătoși, și atingând cu ea mâinile celui căruia i-au fost tăiate de îngerul nevăzut, s-au prins mâinile înapoi! Și aşa s-au săvârșit minunile preaslăvite ale Maiciei Domnului. Aceasta i-a făcut pe toți să strige într-un glas: „Mare este Dumnezeu Iisus Hristos și mare este Prea Curata Lui Maică, Prea Sfânta Fecioară Maria!“.

Și mergeau cu toții împreună. Mergeau chiar și cei ce zavistiau mai înainte, cântând și mărturisindu-și păcatele lui Hristos Dumnezeu, și căndu-se ei de greșeala cea mai dinainte, lăudau pe Maica milostivirii, pe Maica Domnului, care nu a ținuse păcatul lor, ci îi iertase pe toți și le dăduse vindecare.

(Pr. Cleopa, Predică la Adormirea Maiciei Domnului).



Fasting is absolutely indispensable for man. From the external aspect, it is a struggle of filial obedience to God, Who has given us the rules of fasting through His Holy Spirit. From the inner aspect, fasting is a struggle of restraint and self-limitation. In this lies the great value and sense of fasting, since a strict observance of fasts tempers one's will and perfects the character of one who is firm in his religious convictions and actions. Let us not forget that Christ Himself fasted, and foretold that His apostles would also fast. (Metropolitan Philaret - On God's Law).

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Fasting is an exceptional virtue; it represses bodily impulses and gives strength to the soul to fight against the poisoning of the heart through the senses, and provides it with a remedy against any past poisoning. Fasting causes the mind to be cleansed constantly. It withers up every evil thought and brings healthy, godly thoughts -- holy thoughts that enlighten the mind and kindle it with more zeal and spiritual fervor. (Elder Ephraim of Philotheou Mount Athos, "Counsels from the Holy Mountain")

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Fasting tempers loquacity, it is an outlet for compassion and a guard upon obedience; it destroys evil thoughts and roots out the insensibility of the heart. Fasting is a gate to paradise; when the stomach is constricted, the heart is humbled. He who fasts prays with a sober mind, but the mind of the intemperate person is filled with impure fancies and thoughts. (St John Climacus)

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People have to answer greatly for not keeping the rules of the Church with respect to the fasts. People justify themselves by saying that they never considered it a sin to eat dairy products during the fasts. They repent and consider themselves sinners



### CUVANT DESPRE POST

Cand postim nu ajunge sa ne abtinem de la diferite mancaruri, ci trebuie sa postim si sufleteste. Există primejdia ca tinând posturile randuite de Biserica, sa nu avem nici un folos.

Din ce cauza? Pentru ca ne tinem departe de mancaruri, dar nu ne tinem departe de pacat; nu mancam carne, dar mancam sufletele celor saraci; nu ne imbatam cu vin, dar ne imbatam cu pofta trupești;

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petrecem ziua in post, dar ne uitam la lucruri rusinoase.

In felul acesta, pierdem folosul postului.

De aceea, postul de mancare trebuie insotit de indepartarea de orice pacat, de rugaciune si de lupta duhovniceasca.

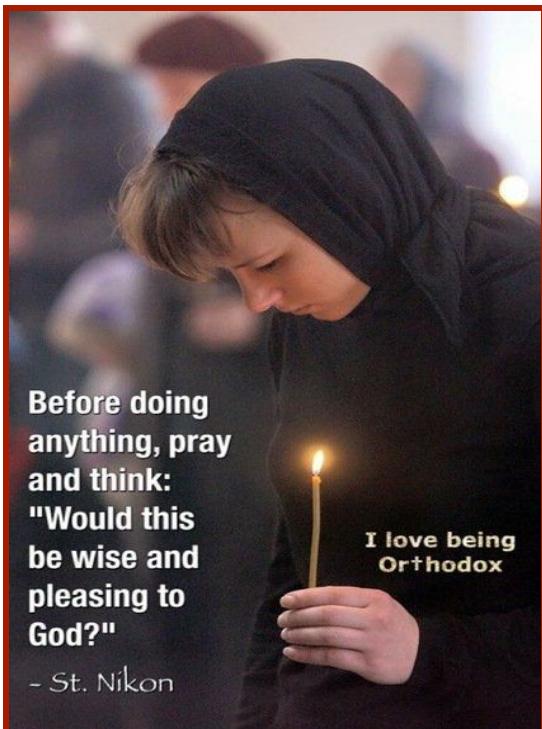
Numai astfel vei aduce jertfa bine placuta Domnului si vei avea mult folos. (Sf. Ioan Gura de Aur)

in every other respect, but they do not think to repent about not keeping the fasts. Meanwhile, they are transgressing the commandment of our holy Mother, the Church, and according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul, they are as the heathen and publicans because of their disobedience. (St. Ambrose of Optina)

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This very flesh which we cherish, rest, gratify, and adorn so much, is — the enemy of our soul, a very crafty and dangerous enemy; it continually resists the love of God, the will of God, the commandments of God, and longs to fulfil its own will, and nearly always succeeds in doing so; unless the Lord God, in His merciful and wise providence for our salvation, opposes a powerful obstacle to this. We must ever crucify this flesh with its passions and lusts, and not cherish it; we must mortify it by fasting, by watchfulness, prayer, work; and exercise the soul by reading the Word of God, by pious meditation and prayer (St. John of Kronstad)

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