



# Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Sun, Aug 9, 2020 - Jesus Walking on Water

9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 8. Afterfeast of the Transfiguration.  
Glorification of Ven. Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America (1970).



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.

The eternal light of Christ our Savior guided thee, O blessed father Herman, on thine evangelical journey to America to proclaim the Gospel of peace. Now thou standest before the throne of glory: intercede for thy land and its people, // asking peace for the world and salvation for our souls.

On the mountain Thou wast transfigured, O Christ God, and Thy Disciples beheld Thy glory as far as they could see it; so that when they would behold Thee crucified, they would understand that Thy suffering was voluntary, and would proclaim to the world // that Thou art truly the Radiance of the Father.

## Epistle Reading - 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

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.

## Hymns for Today

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!

Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, O Christ God, revealing Thy glory to Thy Disciples as far as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting Light also shine upon us sinners, through the prayers of the Theotokos! // O Giver of Light, glory to Thee!

O joyful North Star of the Church of Christ, guiding all men to the Heavenly Kingdom, teacher and apostle of the True Faith, intercessor and defender of the oppressed, adornment of the Orthodox Church in America: Blessed Father Herman of Alaska, pray to our Lord Jesus Christ // for the salvation of our souls!

**DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS:** A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting.

## Gospel Reading - Matthew 14:22-34

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.

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### THIS WEEK'S SERVICE SCHEDULE

(Sat Vespers & Sun Liturgy livestreamed on Facebook)

**TODAY:** 8:40 AM Hours, Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 AM

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### Great Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God

**FRI, Aug 14:** 6:30 PM Great Vespers w Lity

**SAT, Aug 15:** 8:50 AM 3rd Hour, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

### BLESSING OF FLOWERS AND FRAGRANT HERBS

Bring Flowers and Herbs to be blessed following  
Divine Liturgy on the Dormition

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**SAT, August 15:** 5:00 PM Great Vespers

**SUN, August 16:** 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy,  
Coffee Hour, 12 PM Going away meal with the Mecks

## PARISH PRAYER LIST

**Living:** Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Valletta Family, Nadine Breisch, Luke Austin, Rosalie Bagenski, Denise Meck, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Stephen & Mary Krill, Anna Hutz Lahr, Brian Cawley, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Rebecca King, Connie Padrezas, Delores Karas, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Mary DeBenedetto, Violet Filipi, Karl Pfeiffenberger, Lisa Vallone, Christopher Polk, Emma St. Romain & Infant, Catherine, Diane Welgus, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Anastasia Homick, Camden Thomas **Departed:** Barbara Clark, Thomas Podalak, Martin Taylor, Dimitrios L., Gregory Gobish, Sky Kincaid, Kelly Purcell, Jerry Raimondi, Devon Nicewicz, Magdalena

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### Altar Server Schedule

**Sunday, Aug 9:** Christopher D, Symeon C, Ephraim N

**Sunday, Aug 16:** Alec B, Kaleb D, Andrew C

**Sunday, Aug 23:** Alex H, Tommy D, Andrew N

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**SAYING GOODBYE TO THE MECKS!** After a lifetime as residents of NEPA and members of Holy Trinity Church Denise and JP Meck are pulling up stakes and heading to new adventures in Florida at the end of this month. As many know, Denise was the Perogie Project lead and thanks to all her efforts this fundraising activity continued to be the success it has been since the beginning. To officially say goodbye to both her and JP we are planning a shrimp boil in their honor on Sunday, August 16th beginning around noon. This event will be held in and around the pavilion so that social distancing and other guidelines will be maintained. For those who do not eat seafood grilled chicken will be offered. Cost of the event will be \$10 per person. A children's menu of chicken nuggets and fries will be available for \$5 per. Please contact Diane (570-510-1394) or Sandy (571-274-5846) by August 10. In order to keep costs down we ask everyone to bring their own beverage, coolers and ice.

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## The Great Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God



The feast of the Dormition or Falling-asleep of the Theotokos is celebrated on the fifteenth of August, preceded by a two-week fast. This feast, which is also sometimes called the Assumption, commemorates the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ's mother. It proclaims that Mary has been "assumed" by God into the heavenly kingdom of Christ in the fullness of her spiritual and bodily existence.

As with the nativity of the Virgin and the feast of her entrance to the temple, there are no biblical or historical sources for this feast. The Tradition of the Church is that Mary died as all people die, not "voluntarily" as her Son, but by the necessity of her mortal human nature which is indivisibly bound up with the corruption of this world.

The Orthodox Church teaches that Mary is without personal sins. In the Gospel of the feast, however, in the liturgical services and in the Dormition icon, the Church proclaims as well that Mary truly needed to be saved by Christ as all human persons are saved from the trials, sufferings and death of this world; and that having truly died, she was raised up by her Son as the Mother of Life and participates already in the eternal life of paradise which is prepared and promised to all who "hear the word of God and keep it" (Lk11.27-28).

*In giving birth, you preserved your virginity. In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos. You were translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by your prayers, you deliver our souls from death (Troparion).*

*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 (Kontakion).*

The services of the feast repeat the main theme, that the Mother of Life has "passed over into the heavenly joy, into the divine gladness and unending delight" of the Kingdom of her Son (Vespereal hymn). The Old Testament readings, as well as the gospel readings for the Vigil and the Divine Liturgy, are exactly the same as those for the feast of the Virgin's nativity and her entrance into the Temple. Thus, at the Vigil we again hear Mary say: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour" (Lk 1.47). At the Divine Liturgy we hear the letter to the Philippians where Saint Paul speaks of the self-emptying of Christ who condescends to human servitude and ignoble death in order to be "highly exalted by God his Father" (Phil 2.5-11). And once again we hear in the Gospel that Mary's blessedness belongs to all who "hear the word of God and keep it" (Lk 11.27-28).

Thus, the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is the celebration of the fact that all men are "highly exalted" in the blessedness of the victorious Christ, and that this high exaltation has already been accomplished in Mary the Theotokos. The feast of the Dormition is the sign, the guarantee, and the celebration that Mary's fate is, the destiny of all those of "low estate" whose souls magnify the Lord, whose spirits rejoice in God the Saviour, whose lives are totally dedicated to hearing and keeping the Word of God which is given to men in Mary's child, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

Finally it must be stressed that, in all of the feasts of the Virgin Mother of God in the Church, the Orthodox Christians celebrate facts of their own lives in Christ and the Holy Spirit. What happens to Mary happens to all who imitate her holy life of humility, obedience, and love. With her all people will be "blessed" to be "more honorable than the cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim" if they follow her example. All will have Christ born in them by the Holy Spirit. All will become temples of the living God. All will share in the eternal life of His Kingdom who live the life that Mary lived.

In this sense everything that is praised and glorified in Mary is a sign of what is offered to all persons in the life of the Church. It is for this reason that Mary, with the

divine child Jesus within her, is called in the Orthodox Tradition the Image of the Church. For the assembly of the saved is those in whom Christ dwells.

It is the custom in some churches to bless flowers on the feast of the Dormition of the Holy Theotokos.

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## Glorification of St. Herman of Alaska



Herman was born into a simple, merchant family in a suburb of Moscow around 1758. He entered the monastic life in 1772 at the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Skete near St. Petersburg and, in 1779, transferred to the ancient and famous Valaam Monastery in what is Finland today.

At one point while he was at the Trinity-Sergius Skete, the right side of his throat became infected and an abscess formed. He was unable to swallow and his condition worsened, bringing him close to death. As he lay in pain one night, he turned to his icon of the Theotokos and asked her to pray for his health. He then took a moist towel and with it wiped the face of the Virgin and covered his swollen face with the towel, continuing in prayer. Falling into sleep, he saw a vision of the Theotokos healing him. When he woke up in the morning, the swelling was gone and the abscess was completely healed.

In the 18th century, Russia's borders expanded and merchants discovered the Aleutian Islands that formed a chain across the Pacific Ocean to America. With the opening of these islands, the Russian Church recognized the imperative to bring the Gospel to the native inhabitants. The Holy Synod asked for ten men to be sent from the Valaam Monastery to missionize the new territories. Father Herman was among those selected for the historic and holy endeavor. After traveling for nearly a year, the group arrived in America on September 24, 1794, to begin their work. They immediately set up a base of operation and school on Kodiak Island, teaching the natives in both Russian and Aleut and traveling throughout the Aleutian Islands and the Alaskan

mainland. Several thousand of the natives quickly received the Gospel and were baptized.

Within a few years, most of the other members of the original missionary party died; but Herman lived and worked on Spruce Island for more than forty years. He lived in a little hut, and not far from this he built a schoolhouse and a guest house. Father Herman himself spaded a garden in front of his hut, raising potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables. He worked with superhuman strength. He was seen one winter night, for example, carrying a large log that would normally have required four men to lift; and he was barefoot! Everything that he acquired as a result of his immeasurable labors he used for the feeding and clothing of orphans and for books for his students. He loved all and everyone loved to converse with him and to hear his sermons, especially the children, for whom he would bake cookies. He even conversed with wild animals and he fed bears out of his hands. Because of the many miraculous events and healings associated with him, he is known as the "Wonderworker of America." One day, for example, an earthquake caused a tidal wave which threatened to devastate the island. Father Herman placed an icon of the Theotokos on the beach and held a prayer service. Afterward, he told the people that the water would rise no further than the icon; and it was so.

Just before he died, Father Herman asked one of his spiritual children to light the candles and read the Acts of the Apostles. The cell filled with a wonderful, fresh, floral scent; and the elder's face began to glow. Father Herman fell asleep in the Lord on December 13, 1837. His spiritual children kept his body lying in state at the orphanage for a number of weeks, but it did not decay and the sweet scent continued to linger about him.

Almost immediately, the local faithful considered their elder to be a saint; and devotion to Father Herman spread across Russia, Finland, and North America. On August 9, 1970, clergy and laity from the entire Orthodox world gathered in Kodiak formally to declare St. Herman as the first saint glorified on this continent. His feast day is commemorated on December 13.

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