



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 42 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

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Sunday	Aug 13	10th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 1 / Leavetaking of Transfiguration 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Monday	Aug 14	<i>Eve of Dormition</i> 4:30 pm Confession 6:30 pm Vespers Liturgy Blessing of flowers & herbs
Saturday	Aug 19	<i>Martyr Andrew Stratelates</i> 4:00 pm Dzura Memorial Reception 5:30 pm Great Vespers Confession
Sunday	Aug 20	11th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 2 / Prophet Samuel Readings: 1 Cor 9:15:1-11 Mt 18:23-35 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Aug 6

Attendance: (Adults 138, Children 23)	161
Operating	\$2,686.00
OCA Assessments	118.00
Uganda Children	44.00
Charities	25.00
Memorials	170.00
Icons	619.00
Other	30.00

SPECIAL WELCOME

We welcome Annabelle Fredricks who was baptized into Christ this morning. May the Lord plant her firmly in his vineyard and bless and keep her for many years.

WEDDING BANNS

Margaret Janu and Jack LeMaster on Sunday, August 27 at 2:30 pm. .

FESTAL BLESSING

Flowers and fragrant herbs will be blessed following the Vespers Liturgy for Dormition on Monday, August 14.

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, Aug 16 at 7:00 pm.

DZURA MEMORIAL

The 40 Day Memorial for Andy's mom Helen will be served next Saturday, Aug 19 at 4:00 pm. A Reception will follow in the hall.

CONFESSION NOTE

Please be planning to approach for your summer confession. August has many special hours scheduled.

PRAYER CORNER ++++++

Eleanor Alexander (Tom's mom), Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, Jim, & Kathy (Denise F's bro & sis), Jim (Ruth's dad), Michael (Chongris nphw), Ted Geletka, (Fr's frnd), Daniel Conger (Jim R's frnd), Russ Bechkoviak, Connie (Linda D's frnd), Alex Dzura, Zorka, Lillian (Lu D's mom), infant Julian, John Clements, suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Anniversaries: Peter & Sharon Georges (8/16), Greg & Diane Kochan (8/18).

Birthdays: Peter LeMaster, Jaimie Hasenorhl (8/13), Rachel Lannon, Clare Falkov, Christina Iorga (8/14), Cindy Banjoff (8/16), Adam Chongris (8/17).

Newborns: Adelle (Zach & Venessa), Elias (David & Maria), Anabelle (Tom & Laura).

Expecting: Tom & Stephanie, John & Lauren.

Our Seminarian: Brian Crivella & Family.

Newly Illumined: Annabelle, Elizabeth & Anastasia.

Newly Departed: Zorka Alusheff (8/4), Helen Cicmanski (Andy D's mom 7/9), Andrew Cvercko (Fr's good friend 7/3).

Transfiguration: Cultivating the Image of Divine Beauty

By Fr Stephen Kostoff

Last Sunday—August 6—we celebrated the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, which we will continue to celebrate through Sunday 13, the Leavetaking of the Feast. The mysterious presence of Beauty is revealed on Mount Tabor in an overwhelming manner as Christ is transfigured, resplendent in divine glory. This is the beauty of the first-formed human creatures, created to reflect the beauty of the divine nature, for by grace they—and we—were created in the image and likeness of God. And they were placed in a world that also reflected this divine beauty. That is why God, after completing the creation process, declared that it was all “very good.”

Yet, the presence of sin marred that beauty. This lost beauty was restored to humanity when the Son of God assumed our human nature, uniting it to His divine Person and revealing the glory of God in a human being. Thus, on Mount Tabor, Christ reveals the beauty of His divine nature and the beauty of our created human nature. This is why the Transfiguration is often referred to as a “Feast of Beauty.”

The Russian novelist Dostoevsky [+1881] famously and somewhat enigmatically once said, “Beauty will save the world.” Yet, Dostoevsky also realized that in a world filled with sin, beauty can evoke responses that fall short of any saving value. In fact, beauty can even degenerate toward sin and sensuality, as one of Dostoevsky’s greatest creations, Dmitri Karamazov, acknowledged with great anguish. Therefore, for Dostoevsky beauty itself had to be “saved” and linked to Truth and Goodness. Thus, for the Russian novelist, beauty is not simply an aesthetic concept, but one that must have a moral, ethical and spiritual dimension for it to be rightly perceived and experienced. And for Dostoevsky—as well as for not only great artists, but for the great minds of the Church—beauty is not an abstract concept or Idea. Beauty is a Person, and this Person is Christ. In Christ, Truth, Goodness and Beauty are harmoniously united. This is why Dostoevsky also spoke of the “radiant image of Christ.”

In another famous passage from his pen, found in one of his letters, Dostoevsky articulated his personal “creed” as he writes, “I have constructed for myself a symbol of faith in which everything is clear and holy for me. The symbol is very clear, here it is: to believe

that there is nothing more beautiful, more profound, more sympathetic, more reasonable, more courageous and more perfect than Christ, and not only is there nothing, but I tell myself with jealous love that never could there be.”

It is these qualities that make Christ such an attractive figure that a well-disposed mind and heart not unduly influenced by the marks of a fallen world will almost naturally turn to as an “ideal,” but again as a concrete living Person. There is a passage from the personal diary of Father Alexander Elchaninov [+1934] that captures that same intuition as found in Dostoevsky: “It is impossible not to love Christ. If we saw Him now, we should not be able to take our eyes off Him, we should ‘listen to Him in rapture;’ we should flock round Him as did the multitudes in the Gospels. All that is required of us is not to resist. We have only to yield to Him, to the contemplation of His image—in the Gospels, in the saints, in the Church—and He will take possession of our hearts.”

Here, again, there is an inherent moral, ethical and spiritual dimension from that beauty that flows outward from Christ. This is rendered in the form of very practical and concrete advice in the words of Vladimir Solovyov [+1900], for many the greatest Russian philosopher known to us: “Before any important decision, let us evoke in our soul the image of Christ. Let us concentrate our attention upon it and ask ourselves: Would He Himself do this action? Or, in other words: Will He approve of it or not? To all I propose this rule: it does not deceive. In every dubious case, as soon as the possibility of a choice is offered to you, remember Christ. Picture to yourself His living Person, as it really is, and entrust Him with the burden of your doubts. Let men of good will, as individuals, as social factors, as leaders of men and peoples, apply this criterion, and they will really be able, in the name of truth, to show to others the way toward God.”

This concreteness is all the more interesting, for Solovyov was often a highly speculative thinker. That which he wrote just over a century ago is hardly a public ideal any longer—to our great loss. It is our role to maintain and cultivate the image of divine beauty in our lives as seen in the face of the incarnate and transfigured Christ as a sacred obligation.