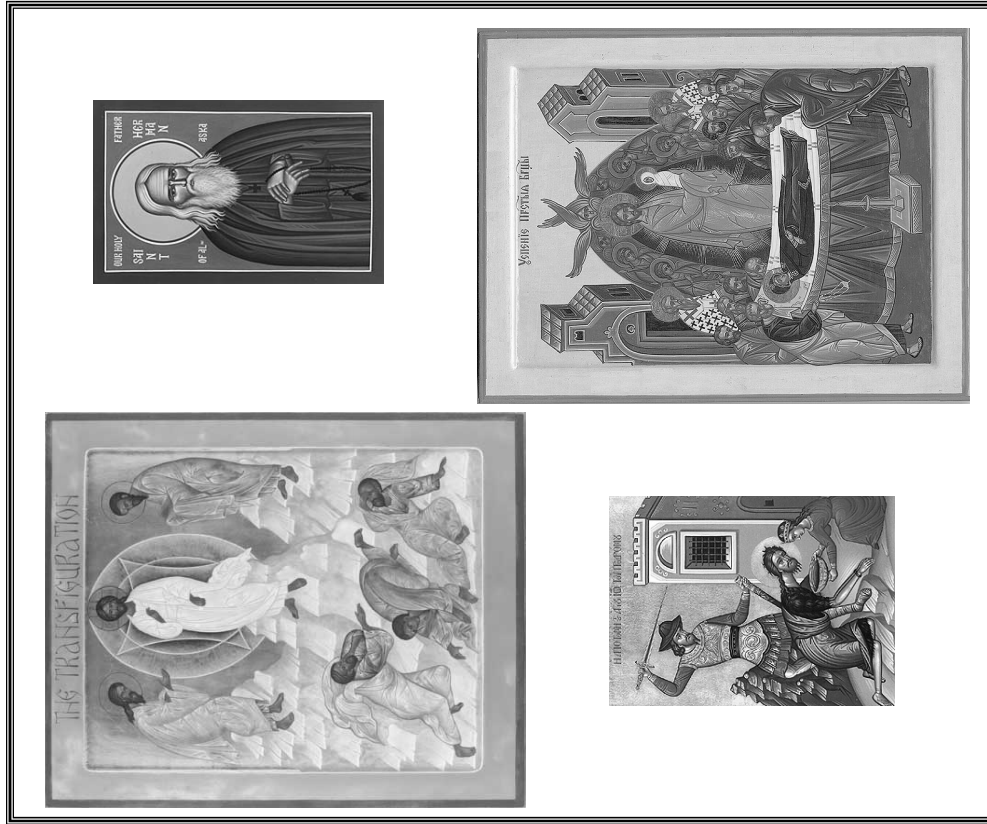




## HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

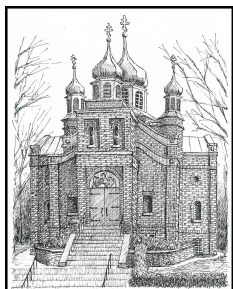
305 Washington Street  
P. O. Box 2876  
New Britain, CT 06050-2876

# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH



# AUGUST 2006

HÖLY TRINITY ÖRTHÖDÖX church					AUGUST 2006	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 DORMMITION EAST (8/1 – 8/14)	2	3	4 Visitation: 9:30 A. M. ARDEN COURTS, AVON INGRAHAM, BRISTOL	5  5:00 p.m. FEASTAL VESPERS w/ Blessing of Fruits
6 TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD 8th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M. Coffee Hour	7	8	9 ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA	10 Visitation: 9:30 A. M. LEDGECREST WALNUT HILL	11	12  Great Vespers 5:00 p.m. CONFESSION
13 9th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M. Coffee Hour	14  Vespers Liturgy 6:00 P.M. Blessing of Flowers	15 DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS	16 Visitation: 9:30 A. M. BRITTANY FARMS JEROME HOME	17	18	19  Great Vespers 5:00 p.m. CONFESSION
20 10th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M. Coffee Hour	21	22 Visitation: 9:30 A. M. NEWINGTON MIDDLEWOODS BEL – AIR MANOR	23  Men's Club @ The Rock Cats	24	25	26  Great Vespers 5:00 p.m. GENERAL CONFESSION
27 11th after Pentecost Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M. Coffee Hour	28  Parish Council Meeting 7:00 P. M.	29 BEREADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST	30  6:30 p.m. Daily Vespers 7:00 p.m. Diocesan Council Meeting	31	SEPT 1 CHURCH NEW YEAR	2  Great Vespers 5:00 p.m. CONFESSION



Monthly Newsletter of  
**HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH**

305 Washington Street • PO Box 2876 • New Britain, CT 06050-2876

[www.htocnb.org](http://www.htocnb.org)

**AUGUST 2006**

**DORMITION FAST:** The fast in preparation for the Great and Holy Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos begins on August 1st and ends with the celebration of the festal liturgy on August 15th.

**The July/August monthly charity** is Pathway/Senderos [*Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention*]. Their mission is to eliminate teen pregnancy by addressing its root causes, assuring high school graduation, and promoting adult self-sufficiency. To provide long-term, comprehensive, holistic services by creating a parallel family structure with at-risk, poverty-stricken, neighborhood youth and parents. (Diplomas before Diapers) 97% of the participants remain pregnancy free and 100% of the participants graduate from high school. The collection is taken on the last Sunday of the month but you may donate early by using the envelope provided in your monthly mailing.

**GENERAL CONFESSION :** is normally held on the last Saturday of each month (except for lenten periods), following Great Vespers. All regular communicants should make every effort to attend each General Confession. Our next General Confession will be held on August 26th, following Vespers.

**PARISH COUNCIL:** The August meeting of the Parish Council will be held on the 28th, the last Monday of the month, as usual. All council members are asked to make every effort to attend the meeting.

**“WHEN I WAS SICK YOU CAME TO ME”**

The following parishioners (and friends) are now homebound or in long-term care facilities. If there are any names missing, please inform Fr. David. The regular schedule of visitations is included on the monthly calendar. Parishioners are welcomed and encouraged to make regular visitations to nursing homes and shut-ins. Our loved ones **NEED** to feel connected to their parish family.

*Ledgecrest Nursing Home, Berlin*

Natasha Zaiko  
Nina Molchan

*Walnut Hill, New Britain*

Agnes Makula  
Olga Skotnicki  
Mary Cherpak  
Milenty Stregotsky

*Jerome Home, New Britain*

Sadie Albino  
Ann Laska  
Anna M. Makula  
Jean Prusik

*Brittany Farms, New Britain*

Olga Halajko

*Newington Care*

Zinaida Sotnick  
Mary Salina

*Middlewoods, Newington*

Jennie Skovich

Archpriest David Koles, Rector  
9 Frankie Lane  
Terryville, CT 06786  
Phone: (860)-573-0013  
Email: [dkoles@snet.net](mailto:dkoles@snet.net)

*Bel—Air Manor, Newington*  
Mary Suski

*Arden Courts, Avon*  
Mildred Dobrowolski

*Southington Care Center, Southington*  
Louise Matyczuk Bechum

*Ingraham Manor, Bristol*  
Juliana (Eulah) Chesky

*Woodlake, Tolland*  
Caroline Skerpan

*At Home:* Mary Bogdan, Anne Cherpak, Mary Glowacki, Nina Hair, Helen Karabin, Mary Roman, Lillian Maddaluno, Milenty & Maria Stregotsky, John & Susan Labas, Nicholas & Lillian Zamayduk, Zenaida Zapatka and Sophia Zardecki.



## PARISH DIPTYCHS

Please remember our departed brothers and sisters in your prayers.

Mary Molchan	79	August 1 1930
Nicholas Kotek	84	August 1 1973
Konstanty Zavadsky	104	August 1 1991
Child Stephen Nazaruk	6	August 2 1935
Sergei Popov	36	August 3 1905
Anna Horbal	80	August 3 1980
John Martinchuk	67	August 4 1939
Katherine Panka	17	August 5 1911
Agafia Makula	56	August 5 1939
Constantine Mazur	70	August 5 1950
Michael Raduha	41	August 6 1911
Zenaida Sunciden		August 6 1914
Child John Sokolovich	6 mo	August 6 1918
Anna Pyzow		August 6 1980
Edward Czerwinski	77	August 6 2003
Mary Zuk	77	August 7 1965
Child Vasili Abhusminov	1 mo	August 8 1909
John Matyczuk	77	August 8 1973
Mary Turek	77	August 8 2002
Anna Shilno	52	August 9 1913
Child Olga Mazur	28 days	August 9 1916
John Matusevich	52	August 9 1947
Stephen Dobosz	86	August 9 2004

Joseph Burak	63	August 10 1955
Joseph Zuk	73	August 10 1957
Paul Belomyzy, Sr.	55	August 10 1961
John J. Hamilla	79	August 11 1957
Andrew Erosh	72	August 11 1965
John Horbal	12	August 12 1936
Child Sophie Valsha	1	August 13 1908
Jacob Michael Haschuk	64	August 13 1961
Olga Kotrady	61	August 13 1969
<b>Mit. Apr. Anthony Diachenko</b>		<b>August 13 1970</b>

### Rector: 1914

Child Mary Mardetska	2	August 14 1917
Anastasia Diachuk		August 15 1941
Natalie Snitko	48	August 16 1927
Foma Protesena	71	August 16 1960
Child John Petriska	8 mo	August 17 1906
Anna Hamilla	89	August 17 1948
John Harko	80	August 17 1975
Arthur MacKendrick	72	August 18 1984
Anne Grabowski	76	August 18 2002
Michael Turek	84	August 19 1982
Alexy Dorochin	73	August 20 1964
Sophie Hansky		August 20 1985
Philip Russinski	89	August 20 1997
Concetto James Camarata	73	August 20 1997
Peter Labas	83	August 21 1978
Child Marina Komchuk	1	August 22 1911
Paul Culton	60	August 22 1949
Helen Chernowski	62	August 22 1953
Peter Petrisko	55	August 23 1942
Olga Burak	58	August 23 1954
Nadezhda Novak	74	August 23 1990
<b>Mit. Apr. Vasily Vasilieff</b>		<b>August 24 1956</b>

### Rector: 1919 - 1921

Agatha Romanink	74	August 24 1964
Mildred (Nadezhda) Tompkins	73	August 24 1984
Steve Katrenich	60	August 25 1947
Jennie Cormier	44	August 25 1953
Anthony Raduha	42	August 26 1932
Feodor Sawicki	69	August 26 1959
Mary Adamowicz	87	August 27 1975
Andrew Homik	25	August 28 1909
Vladimir Polesuktov	37	August 28 1927
Efrosinia Truhan	60	August 28 1949
Stephen Peresada	42	August 29 1913
John M. Karabin	64	August 29 1983
Paraska Szafran	88	August 29 1988
Child Theresa-Elizabeth Koles	3 days	August 30 1952
Fannie (Thekla) Zaiko		August 30 1984
Mary Steffick Carlson	92	August 30 1994

ВѢЧНАА ПАМЯТЬ

## FEAST DAYS IN AUGUST:

The Transfiguration of Christ is one of the central events recorded in the gospels. Immediately after the Lord was recognized by his apostles as **“the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the Living God”** he told them that **“he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things. . .and be killed and on the third day be raised.”** (Matthew 16) The announcement of Christ's approaching passion and death was met with indignation by the disciples. And then, after rebuking them, the Lord took Peter, James and John **“up to a high mountain,”** by tradition Mount Tabor, and was **“transfigured before them.”**

In the Transfiguration, the apostles see the glory of the Kingdom of God present in majesty in the person of Christ. They see that in him, indeed, **“all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,”** that **“in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.”** (Colossians 1:19, 2:9) They see this before the crucifixion so that in the resurrection they might know who it is who has suffered for them, and what it is that this one, who is God, has prepared for those who love him. This is what the Church Celebrates in the feast of the Transfiguration.

**Moses and Elijah**, according to the liturgical verses, are not only the greatest figures of the Old Testament who now come to worship the Son of God in glory, they also are not merely two of the holy men to whom God has revealed himself in the prefigurative theophanies of the Old Covenant of Israel. These two figures actually stand for the Old Testament itself: Moses for the Law and Elijah for the Prophets. And Christ is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 5: 17)

They also stand for the living and dead, for Moses died and his burial place is known, while: Elijah was taken alive into heaven in order to appear again to announce the time of God's salvation in Christ the Messiah.

The feast of the Transfiguration is presently celebrated on the sixth of August, probably for some historical reason. The summer celebration of the feast, however, has lent itself very well to the theme of transfiguration. 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.

+ + +

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 call 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.”** (Luke 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 Savior, whose lives are totally dedicated to hearing and keeping the Word of God which is given to men in Mary's child, the Savior 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.

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

Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko,  
*The Orthodox Faith, Volume II: Worship*  
Dept. of Religious Education:OCA 1972



### Parish Council Minutes

The June 2006 Parish Council meeting was held in the

church hall on Monday, June 27, 2006. Warden Michael Wanik called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. A quorum was noted-also 1 guest speaker. Father David Koles lead the opening prayer "O Heavenly King".

Fr. John Dresko, now Director of Development of the OCA, at the request of Fr. David and Mike Wanik, joined the meeting as a guest and addressed current events in the life of the Church. He discussed questions about the finances of the Church and the controversies and accusations that are being investigated along with some of the plans for moving forward. He answered questions and has made himself available to anyone who has further questions."

Thanks to Father John for the update.

**Secretary's Report** Motion to accept the minutes as submitted Paul Salina/Marion Bichun. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

May Income \$10,557.10 Large expenses-withholding & social security deposit

Expense \$11,210.94 and Pascha flowers

Exp/inc (\$653.84)

May charity-discretionary fund \$429

Budget summary

Income \$80,430.58

Expense \$73,620.76

Inc/Exp \$6809.82

The up to date balance sheet is attached.

Paul Salina has audited the May figures. Motion to accept the May audited report Al Hromi/Paul Culton.

We are still looking for someone to volunteer for the financial secretary position that will be vacated in January.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mailing List: Father Koles has been working on this, the files have been updated and we now have on line capabilities.

Choir Director Adjustment: Juliana Koles is now in training. She will be transitioning to payroll. We will need to review and create a package/step program.

Church "Leak": Michael Wanik spoke with Dan Bradanini who now thinks the water isn't going down but water going up. The columns are porous and water vapor is getting trapped and that may be why we don't see actual water damage. There are 2 vendors coming to look at this Thursday. This may be as easy as installing a vent in the roof.

Cemetery "Coyote": There have been reports of coyotes or wolves being seen at the cemetery. The dog warden will be patrolling the cemetery.

Project Management Review: Mike Wanik reviewed the attached chart of the ongoing projects. The church hall/entry roofs have not leaked since the drains cleaned and we have had plenty of rain. The area may just need some maintenance. We should be able to resume the rug replacement and the ceiling tile replacement this fall. Mike Wanik will contact David Bartos. Betty and Larry Beck have donated \$1,000 towards the purchase of the new rug. A discussion followed for other ideas for donations. At this time a note will be placed in the bulletin indicating donations for projects will always be accepted and are definitely appreciated.

Al Hromi is looking into anti-fatigue mats for the kitchen. Marion Bichun indicated the stove was fixed last week and the hood is in process. We still need to set a date for the strategic planning session. It was mentioned that some CCSU bushes are hanging over the fence at the cemetery-Mike will look into it and contact CCSU if need be. Paul Culton also noted the area around the cross at the cemetery has been cleaned up. We are looking to see who are servicemen were who are buried in our cemetery. It was recalled that Amber Fiedler and Rebecca Karabin worked on this. Al Hromi will look into getting the oriental rugs cleaned. The graffiti on the garage has been covered but still needs to be repainted. Nothing new on the insurance update. We still need to obtain a fine arts rider-Paul Salina will photograph the icons and Father David will label them. John Dorsey is to replace the lock on the front door-it is really bad in wet and cold weather. Ellen Santoro will organize an outside cleanup of landscaping-overgrown bushes-shrubs-weeds etc.

HTOC website: Motion to use Orthodox Web Solutions not to exceed \$600 by Al Hromi/Diane Polzun. Motion carried.

From the Floor: none.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

House donation/fund investment-earmarking: A parishioner wants to donate a house to the parish. The house is in New Britain. What do we want to do?? We need to begin thinking. It was mentioned that Nick P. from the Pittsfield, MA parish may be able to give us some information as a parishioner donated a home there. Father David will contact him. We need to discuss these types of donations in a strategic planning session-what do we want to do in the future planning??

Handicap Parking: People are double and triple parking. People need to be courteous of others. The 2 handicap signs in the spaces in the parking lot below need to be removed.

Glass door damage by landscaper Josh Karabin reported that a rock broke the glass door and had to be replaced. Mike Wanik was able to get an immediate replacement for \$310. He will work with Josh for restitution.

Jennie and George vacations: George will be away until July 9 and Jennie will be away July 16-July 31.

Charity July and August: Motion for Pathways Senders to be the charity for July/August by Rosemary Delaney/Ellen Santoro. Motion carried.

From the floor

\*We are in need of a delegate for the Diocesan Assembly in October in Maynard, MA.

\*It was mentioned the microphone isn't working-Father will change the batteries.

\*Pew in garage-Scott Ahern works at the prison and will be able to get it refinished at no cost and then it will be brought downstairs.

\*A suggestion to recognize the Altar Servers (and Kristina) for their dedicated work.

\*Ad for St Mary's in Waterbury 100th anniversary- Motion to get full page ad \$100 Ellen Santoro/Marion Bichun. Motion carried.

\*Piroghi workshop-Need workers to make sauerkraut piroghi Saturday July 9.

**Next Meeting-** Monday August 28, 2006 7pm

Motion to adjourn 8:48pm by Diane Polzun. The meeting concluded with “It is Truly Meet”.

Respectfully submitted,  
Phyllis Bartos



## MARY, OUR CAUSE OF REJOICING

by Bishop Basil

Mary the Theotokos is very close to my heart, and, I am certain, close to the hearts of all who love her Son, Jesus. I can hardly think of her name without tears. When God, in the fullness of time, because of His great love for His creation, sent His Only-Begotten Son to save us sinners, He chose to do so in a way that is at once simple and tender, and profound, beyond our comprehension. He came to find a bride.

And God the Father, who is above all and in all and over all, chose to unite Himself, through the Person of the Most Holy Spirit, with one of us: the only daughter of Joachim and Anna, the young woman of Nazareth who had been prepared from all ages to become the bride of God. She is our boast. She is like us in her earthly beginning, and she is like us in her earthly end. She is at once our sister—a daughter of Adam, just like us—and also our mother.

To begin the betrothal of Mary with God, an archangel was sent, one of those who stand perpetually around the throne of God and sing His praises. An angel, beneath whom mankind was created, was sent to the house of Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin, and began the relationship of betrothal and marriage, an unwedded marriage, between God the Father and the young virgin of Nazareth, with the word, “Rejoice.”

The hymnography of our Church says that when the Archangel was sent he came in awe and wonder, and he stood in confusion in this humble abode in North Palestine, announcing to a creature on a scale lower than his own that she was to become the Bride of the Father, the Mother of the co-eternal Son. Her relationship with God is our cause of rejoicing. She is our offering, our oblation, our prosphora [Eucharist bread], offered to the Father, from which the Lamb of God will come forth—the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. In a very real way, she became the first to receive Jesus as her Lord and Savior. She alone among all humanity can say that she not only received Jesus into her heart spiritually, but she housed Jesus in her womb, in her body.

To imagine Mary’s response to that news of the Archangel Gabriel is beyond our comprehension. We have become so accustomed to hearing the account of the Annunciation that we forget the power and the wonder and the godly fear that

must have overcome this young virgin. She was only about fourteen years of age when she said “Yes,” and when all creation began its rejoicing at its salvation.

“My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,” she sings. She becomes a prophetess when she says, “Behold, all generations shall call me blessed.” She whom all generations call blessed and she in whom all rejoices was our offering to God. We see this in a well-known hymn from the Nativity of Our Lord:

The angels offer Thee a hymn; the heavens, a star; the Magi, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, the manger; and we offer Thee a Virgin Mother.

When it came time for God to send His Son and take flesh on this earth, all of His creation wanted to offer a gift. The earth offered a warm cave, and the heavens offered a star—not just any star, but a brilliant star such as the world has never seen and may never see again. The bodiless hosts offered a glorious hymn, the most glorious hymn with the most glorious message ever heard on earth. Even the animals offered a gift. They offered their food trough, the manger. And beyond that, tradition tells us that they offered their breath to warm the newborn Child.

The poor shepherds could offer nothing but their wonder, but they offered that. They came and knelt in that very strange cave that was the temple. Magi who traveled from afar came and offered their best gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. And we, humanity, offered God our best gift, a Virgin Mother.

Her relationship with Christ was a unique relationship, something that no one else can have. It gives her a unique place in salvation history. Until the coming of the Archangel Gabriel to the dwelling in Nazareth, the people of God would make pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem, to worship God who was present there, and to revere the very stones of the temple. Yet at a moment in time, in an obscure Palestinian village, in a young virgin, that temple became passé and irrelevant. She became the temple, and it is for that reason that we venerate her. She became the temple, a unique thing that gives her a unique position in our salvation. It was from her blood that God took blood, blood that would become the fountain for our immortal life. It was of her flesh that God took flesh, the flesh that is now offered to us as the food of immortality.

Who but Mary breastfed Him who feeds all of creation? Who but Mary carried in her arms as mother Him who sustains and upholds all the universe? It was Mary who upheld God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, as He took His first steps on this earth. She offered her little finger for a tiny hand to grasp. When the child Jesus, as He must have done, scraped His knee or was hurt by some unkind words of a playmate, and wept and came running to



mother, it was Mary who kissed the wound and made it feel better, or took Him in her arms and assured Him that the unkind words and the sadness He felt would pass, that everything would be all right. She brought comfort to God. And when God wept, when Jesus wept, it was His mother, like every mother, who wiped away His tears. Mary wiped away the tears from the face of God.

What is profound about this is not just the fact that these things happened, but that Mary knew who it was that she supported with her little finger. She knew who it was who suckled at her breast, whose diapers she changed. She knew who it was whose wounds she kissed and bandaged, whose hurt feelings she comforted, and whose tears she wiped away. Mary knew.

In the Feast of the Presentation, she brought her Son to that stone building in Jerusalem that she knew was no longer needed, knowing that He was the Son of God. It was at that time that her sorrows began. Forty days after the birth of her only Son, the great sorrow that would come to her heart was foretold to her: that there would come a day when His wound would be not just a scraped knee, but nailed hands and feet, and a pierced side. That the tears He shed and the unkind words and actions He endured would be not just unkind words of little playmates, but the sentence of death from those whom He came to save. How her heart must have been pierced wanting to kiss those hands, and the feet, and the side, and the brow, to make the wounds and the pain go away, to no avail. And how she must have anticipated receiving her Son from the Cross, now dead.

Who among all humankind has offered so much to our God? She offered her flesh to become His flesh, her blood to become His blood. She offered every motherly tenderness (and there's no tenderness like a mother's tenderness)—who but Mary endured such pain? Our hymnographers show us Mary standing at the Cross, remembering Christ the child when He took His first steps, and when He said His first word, and when He shed His first tear, and when He laughed His first laugh, and called her "Mother" for the first time. Imagine, now, that very human Mary standing at the Cross.

The Theotokos was overcome with sorrow Seeing You crucified and dead on the Cross. She cried out, "How You suffer, my beloved Son! The sword thrust in Your side has pierced my heart. My wound burns with Your agony. Nevertheless I sing Your praise, For You willingly died to save the human race."

"Nevertheless I sing Your praise." In spite of all the ugliness she sees and the pain she endures at seeing her Son unjustly crucified by those He came to save, yet she glorifies Him. She knows He is God. The only thing that can balance that sorrow is the joy she had three days later, when her Son rose as victor. Imagine her joy when the angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, again I say rejoice, for your Son is risen from

His three days in the tomb, and with Himself He has raised all the dead. Rejoice, rejoice!"

It is not a theological proposition, but a simple fact, that God became man, He became what you and I are in everything except our sin. And for that to be possible, He needed a mother. The honors and prerogatives given to her during His earthly life must pale compared to those accorded to her now that He is seated at the right hand of His Father on the throne of glory, bearing the flesh and the blood which He took from her. Her flesh and blood given to Him, her Son, sits at the right hand of the Father and is accorded worship by thousands of angels and ten thousands of archangels—her flesh and blood, the flesh and blood of Adam, the flesh and blood which you and I share with her, and because of her, with our God.

It is no accident, then, that our Lord's first miracle, at the wedding in Cana, was worked at her intercession. And at her intercession, although the wedding reception is nearly over, He makes over a hundred gallons of the very best wine. When His mother asks, He pours forth His grace abundantly and richly. Who would do less, at the request of his mother? Thus Mary has what the hymnographers call "motherly boldness" in interceding with Christ—and as our mother also, she is always ready to intercede on our behalf.

Mary is our boast, our cause of rejoicing, our sister, our mother, and most of all, our intercessor. Let us honor her, love her, and bring our needs before her with the innocent confidence of children who know that their mother will meet their needs with love.

"She stands at His right as a real Queen, with much boldness, clad in golden garments, attired in embroidery, according to the prophetic saying. Yea, she [stands at] the royal throne glittering as the glorious Queen of heaven and earth, and shining inside and outside with the lightings of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as the ever-illuminating Bride and Mother of the heavenly King of Glory, Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour . . . she stands at the right side of the Son, embroidered in the virtues and gifts of purity, of holiness, everything beautiful, chosen, innocent, as the holiest of saints, noblest of the cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the seraphim and all the heavenly hosts, being thus, next to God, venerated, glorified, and praised above all beings in heaven and earth." —St. John of Damascus

*Bishop BASIL (Essey) is Bishop of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese.*

*This article was previously published in the Volume 1 Number 1 issue of The Handmaiden, released in the winter of 1996, having been adapted from a talk given by Bishop BASIL in Ben Lomond, California, in February, 1995. It is reprinted in the volume 10#1 issue as part of our celebration of our tenth anniversary of publication.*