



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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Venerable Theodora of Alexandria

September 11, 2022

Troparion – Tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: “Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,// granting the world great mercy!”

Troparion – Tone 4

Thy nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe! The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from thee, O Theotokos. By annulling the curse, He bestowed a blessing.// By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Troparion – Tone 8

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Mother, for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal.// Therefore thy spirit, venerable Theodora, rejoices with the angels.

Kontakion – Tone 4

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master,// He has risen on the third day!

Kontakion – Tone 2

Thou didst deplete thy bodily strength by fasting, vigil, and prayers, entreating the Creator to grant forgiveness of thy sin; having received it, thou didst show us the way of repentance,// venerable Mother Theodora.

Kontakion – Tone 4

By thy nativity, O most pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness, Adam and Eve — from the corruption of death. And we, thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to thee:// “The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life.”

Prokeimenon – Tone 6

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance!

V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Prokeimenon – Tone 3

My soul doth magnify the Lord, / and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

Venerable Theodora of Alexandria

Saint Theodora of Alexandria and her husband lived in Alexandria. Love and harmony ruled in their family, and this was hateful to the Enemy of salvation. Goaded on by the devil, a certain rich man was captivated by the youthful beauty of Theodora and began with all his abilities to lead her into adultery, but for a long time he was unsuccessful. Then he bribed a woman of loose morals, who led the unassuming Theodora astray by saying that a secret sin, which the sun does not see, is also unknown to God.

Theodora betrayed her husband, but soon came to her senses and realizing the seriousness of her fall, she became furious with herself, slapping herself on the face and tearing at her hair. Her conscience gave her no peace, and Theodora went to a renowned abbess and told her about her transgression. The abbess, seeing the repentance of the young woman, spoke to her of God's forgiveness and reminded her of the sinful woman in the Gospel, who washed the feet of Christ with her tears and received from Him forgiveness of her sins. In hope of the mercy of God, Theodora said: "I believe my God, and from now on, I shall not commit such a sin, and I will strive to atone for my deed."

At that moment Saint Theodora resolved to go off to a monastery to purify herself by labor and by prayer. She left her home secretly, and dressing herself in men's clothes, she went to a men's monastery, since she feared that her husband would find her in a women's monastery.

The igumen of the monastery, in order to test the resolve of the newcomer, would not even bless her to enter the courtyard. Saint Theodora spent the night at the gates. In the morning, she fell down at the knees of the igumen, and said her name was Theodore from Alexandria, and entreated him to let her remain at the monastery for repentance and monastic labors. Seeing the sincere intent of the newcomer, the igumen consented.

Even the experienced monks were amazed at Theodora's all-night prayers on bended knee, her humility, endurance and self-denial. The saint labored at the monastery for eight years. Her body, once defiled by adultery, now became a vessel of the grace of God and a receptacle of the Holy Spirit.

Once, the saint was sent to Alexandria to buy provisions. After blessing her for the journey, the igumen indicated that in case of a delay, she should stay over at the Enata monastery, which was on the way. Also staying at the guest house of the Enata monastery was the daughter of its igumen. She had come to visit with her father. Attracted by the comeliness of the young monk, she tried to seduce the monk Theodore into the sin of fornication, not knowing that it was a woman standing before her. Meeting with refusal, she committed sin with another guest and became pregnant. Meanwhile, the saint bought the food and returned to her own monastery.

After a certain while the father of the shameless girl, realizing that a transgression had occurred, began to question his daughter about the father of the child. The girl indicated that it was the monk Theodore. The father at once reported it to the Superior of the monastery where Saint Theodora labored in asceticism. The igumen summoned the saint and repeated the accusation. The saint firmly replied: "As God is my witness, I did not do this." The igumen, knowing of Theodore's purity and holiness of life, did not believe the accusation.

When the girl gave birth, the Enata monks brought the infant to the monastery where the ascetic lived, and began to reproach its monks for an unchaste life. But this time even the igumen believed the slanderous accusation and became angry at the innocent Theodore. They entrusted the infant into the care of the saint and threw her out of the monastery in disgrace.

The saint humbly submitted to this new trial, seeing in it the expiation of her former sin. She settled with the child not far from the monastery in a hut. Shepherds, out of pity, gave her milk for the infant, and the saint herself ate only wild vegetables.

Bearing her misfortune, the holy ascetic spent seven years in banishment. Finally, at the request of the monks, the igumen allowed her to return to the monastery with the child, and in seclusion she spent two years instructing the child.

The igumen of the monastery received a revelation from God that the sin of the monk Theodore was forgiven. The grace of God dwelt upon the monk Theodore, and soon all the monks began to witness to the signs worked through the prayers of the saint.

Once, during a drought, all the wells dried up. The igumen said to the brethren that only Theodore would be able to reverse the misfortune. Having summoned the saint, the igumen bade her to bring forth water, and the water in the well did not dry up afterwards. The humble Theodore said that the miracle was worked through the prayer and faith of the igumen.

Before her death, Saint Theodora shut herself in her cell with the child and instructed him to love God above all things. She told him to obey the igumen and the brethren, to preserve tranquility, to be meek and without malice, to avoid obscenity and silliness, to love non-covetousness, and not to neglect their communal prayer. After this, she prayed and, for the last time, she asked the Lord to forgive her sins. The child also prayed together with her. Soon the words of prayer faded from the lips of the ascetic, and she peacefully departed to a better world.

The Lord revealed to the igumen the spiritual accomplishments of the saint, and also her secret. The igumen, in order to remove any dishonor from the deceased, in the presence of the igumen and brethren of the Enata monastery, told of his vision and uncovered the bosom of the saint as proof.

The Enata igumen and brethren shrank back in terror at their great transgression. Falling down before the body of the saint, with tears they asked forgiveness of Saint Theodora. News of Saint Theodora reached her former husband. He received monastic tonsure at this same monastery where his wife had been. And the child, raised by the nun, also followed in the footsteps of his foster-mother. Afterwards, he became igumen of this very monastery.

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16:13-24

Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love. I urge you, brethren – you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints – that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us. I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men. The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The salutation with my own hand – Paul’s. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Gospel: John 3:13-17

No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42

Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?” They said to Him, “He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

Service Schedule for the week of September 11

Sunday September 11 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by prayers for the Sunday School children, and then Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Tuesday September 13 – **ELEVATION OF THE CROSS** 7:00 PM Vespers with Litya

Wednesday September 14 – **ELEVATION OF THE CROSS** 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Saturday September 17 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday September 18 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee hour in Daria Hall

Holy Day Service Schedule for 2022

November 21 – ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS IN THE TEMPLE 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

December – to be announced

Weekly Giving

September 4 – 61 adults, 16 youth, \$3,932

Parish Announcements

Please remember in your prayers those who perished on or because of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. May God grant them peace in his Kingdom of Heaven.

St. Tikhon Seminary has asked parishes to have a special collection for the next few weeks to collect funds to help offset the cost of the newly constructed addition to the Monastery building for the monks. We will collect all donations and send one check to St. Tikhon's, so if you will be donating by check please make it payable to St Vladimir Orthodox Church. Thank you for your generosity.

A prayer service for the Sunday School children will be held today after Divine Liturgy. If you have not yet done so, please sign up your child(ren) ages 4 and above for Sunday School classes – the sign-up sheet is in the back of the church. **All classes will begin next Sunday September 18 after Communion.**

The Annual Parish Picnic will be held at the parish picnic grounds on Sunday September 25 after Divine Liturgy. As usual, the church will provide the meats (roasted pig, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs) and we ask those attending to bring other needed items. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the back of the church – please sign up to let us know what you can bring. Cleaning and set up will take place on Saturday September 24. Thank you!

Last week we announced the beginning of on-line giving! The announcement is at the end of the Bulletin again this week. Please remember this is an easy way to consistently make your donations to the church! If you have questions please see a member of the Parish Council.

The annual Turkey Social (Bingo) will be held in Daria Hall on Sunday November 13 after Divine Liturgy. Sheets will soon be available on the tables in Daria Hall indicating what donations will be needed. As usual, we will need volunteers – please let Nina or Darice know if you can help!

Youth and adults of the parish are invited to Bible Study classes during Coffee Hour. The classes are taught by Alan Berck.

REGARDING COFFEE HOUR HOSTING:

Please remember that when you are hosting Coffee Hour someone will be there to assist and guide you, but you are responsible for setting up and running the Coffee Hour. You should plan on arriving at Daria Hall at 9:00-9:15 AM to start setting up - please do not drop off your food and leave unless you have obligations for the church services. Hosting includes leaving church with the assistant after Communion to put out food and start the coffee, and then refilling the coffee pots as needed during Coffee Hour, cleaning up after Coffee Hour, taking the trash out the kitchen door to the trash cans, etc. We appreciate how willing everyone has been to host! And remember, Coffee Hour is whatever you want it to be! When we first started having Coffee Hour in the church basement decades ago, it was simply rolls and butter, bagels, donuts, coffee and tea – and fellowship as we have today in Daria Hall. As the years progressed and we outgrew the church basement, people started adding foods (cold and hot) to the selection. The intent of Coffee Hour is to socialize with our parish family, to get to know each other, and have a bite to eat while doing this. Thank you all for your participation!

REGARDING COFFEE HOUR:

If you are participating in Coffee Hour and not hosting, please remember to make a donation in the donation basket. The donations are used to purchase the cups, cup sleeves, coffee filters, stirrers, plates, paper towels, napkins, plasticware, trash bags, sugar, creamer, coffee, tea, juice, etc. And, as we are all aware, prices continue to go up for everything. We appreciate your generosity! P.S. Don't forget – donations of spring water for making the coffee are appreciated!

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK:

Justina Meyer – September 13

Lizabeth Kasmer – September 13

Have a blessed birthday and may God grant you many years!

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE – Coffee Hour Preparation Instructions are available in the Daria Hall kitchen

Sept. 11 Karina Kotelnicki, Darice Keyes
Sept. 18 Ekaterina & Stanislav Uritsky, Nancy Mitsos
Sept. 25 ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC – no Coffee Hour
Oct. 2 Gebrekvistas Amleset, Alla Strauss
Oct. 9 Bill & Margie DiCicco, Chris Kasmer, Nina Laushell
Oct. 16 Ramazi Shubitidze, Herman Meyer, Francine Brady
Oct. 23 Alex Godun, Awet Tesfa
Oct. 30 Phyllis Eck, Darice Keyes
Nov. 6 Paula & Ludwig Koerte, Awet Tesfa
Nov. 13 TURKEY SOCIAL – no Coffee Hour
Nov. 20 **FAST DAY** Alex & Brittani Brasowski, Darice Keyes
Nov. 27 **FAST DAY** Germain & Tahara Ortiz, Nina Laushell
Dec. 4 **FAST DAY** Paul Denko, Francine Brady, Herman Meyer
Dec. 11 **FAST DAY** Olga & James Bates, Alla Strauss
Dec. 18 **FAST DAY** Father Volodymyr & Matushka Oksana, Darice Keyes
Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS – no Coffee Hour
Jan. 1 Matthew & Kris Bohush, Awet Tesfa

ON-LINE GIVING

We have exciting news! St. Vladimir Orthodox Church is now offering our parishioners and friends of the parish online giving services through our website!

We are providing this option in addition to the traditional envelope, cash, or check donations. Of course, you may still donate to the church through these traditional methods, but now you also have the option to set up recurring or one-time donations online with a credit/debit card or electronic check. This program is beneficial so that you do not need to worry about remembering your donation envelope or donation every Sunday!

To give on-line through our new platform, visit our website: saintvladimir.org. Scroll down the home page and in the Donation section there are two blue buttons. The LEARN HOW button takes you to a tutorial about the online giving process. The PLEASE DONATE! button gives you the "Give Now" or "Sign In" selection at the top of the page under the heading.

"Give Now" is for a one-time donation.

"Sign In" is where you set up your account, and the system takes care of donating for you with the recurring donation option. To set up your account, scroll towards the bottom of the screen and click on the blue "Create One" – this is where you enter your information. You do not need to re-enter your information if you need to change anything in your account. If you need to make a change after your account is set up, you simply log in to your account by entering your email address and the password you previously created.

The ParishSoft system will credit your account with every online donation you make! Year-end financial statements will still be available regardless of how you choose to donate to the church.

We are very pleased that our new ParishSoft Accounting System has made this electronic option available to our parish! Members of the Parish Council are available to answer any of your questions.