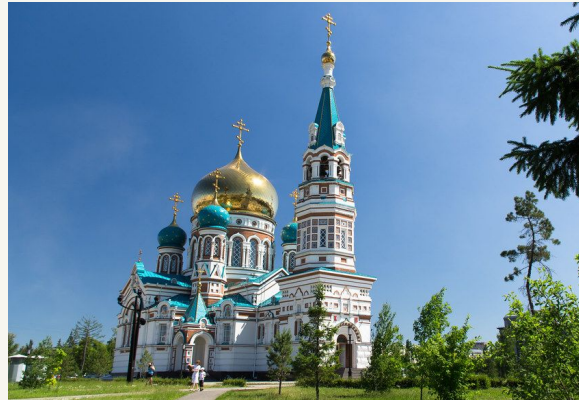


Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Penn State Newsletter

9/10/2020



The Assumption Cathedral
Omsk, Russia

Featured Saint: Saint Theodora of Alexandria



Saint Theodora of Alexandria, a fifth century saint, is commemorated every year on September 11th. Saint Theodora committed adultery against her husband, and to atone for her sin, she entered a men's monastery. Saint Theodora dressed as a man and was known as Theodore to the other monks. She became known for her humility and her fervent prayers. When a woman accused Saint Theodora (then known as Theodore) of fathering her child, Saint Theodora was banished from the monastery and the child was taken into her care. In a hut not far from the monastery, Theodora continued her life of prayer and raised the child. It was only after Theodora's death that her true identity as a woman was revealed to the other monks. Venerable Mother Theodora, pray to Christ who has magnified you to grant us his great mercy!

Featured Icon: Hawaiian-Iveron Icon



The Hawaiian-Iveron Icon is a replica of the original Icon called Panagia Portaitissa (Iveron Theotokos) from Mount Athos. The Hawaiian icon first streamed myrrh in 2008 and has been seen doing so ever since. During Pascha 2019 the cloth holding the Hawaiian-Iveron Icon can be seen soaked with myrrh and videos of this can be found online.

The original Panagia Portaitissa icon is known as “Wonderworking” due to its numerous miracles that have been attributed to people’s prayer to the Theotokos before the icon. The icon is also referred to as Portaitissa or “Gate-Keeper” due to the original icon choosing to be above monastery gates.

The mark on the cheek of the Holy Virgin is said to have been caused by someone who stabbed the icon which soon caused the icon to bleed during the occurrence and due to this, the icon is depicted with a scar and drops of blood on her cheek.

The full story can be found at this [link](#).

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

What is the Exaltation of the Holy Cross?

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated on **September 14th**, is one of the 12 Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church. On this day we commemorate the finding of Christ’s Cross by St. Helen in the 4th century.

For more information about the feast day, click [here](#).

How do we celebrate?

Our celebration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is bittersweet. Even as we feel sadness and humility in recognition of the suffering that Christ endured on the Cross, we also feel joy

because of the salvation that comes through that suffering. Just as we fast every Friday in remembrance of the Cross, so too do we fast on the feast day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Holy Trinity Orthodox Church will be holding an 8 A.M. liturgy on Monday, September 14th in honor of the feast day.

Coronavirus in the Holy Land: A Greek Orthodox Perspective

An article written by Anna Koulouris highlights how the pandemic has affected the church, especially in Jerusalem. While the pandemic has changed the way the church practices, it has not been able to change the traditions or the mindsets of the people. Confined to their homes, the orthodox people have continued to remain faithful, trusting in God that he will see us through this trying time, and living not by fear but by faith. She discusses how different this year's Pascha was, being celebrated in a near empty church instead of one packed with parishioners and people traveling from all over the world to witness the miraculous light. The church has asked individuals to cooperate with government authorities, to take the lockdown and the guidelines seriously, but also to remember that the church is there to provide support.

To read the full article, click [here](#).

Featured Prayer: Prayer for Enemies

Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst command us to love our enemies, and those who defame and injure us, and to pray for them and forgive them; Who Thyself didst pray for Thine enemies, who crucified thee: grant us, we pray, the spirit of Christian reconciliation and meekness, that we may heartily forgive every injury and be reconciled with our enemies. Grant us to overcome the malevolence and offences of people with Christian meekness and true love of our neighbor. We

further beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant to our enemies true peace and forgiveness of sins; and do not allow them to leave this life without true faith and sincere conversion. And help us repay evil with goodness, and to remain safe from the temptations of the devil and from all the perils which threaten us, in the form of visible and invisible enemies. Amen.
