

ST. JACOB OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH
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November 15, 2009

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President

✠ ✠ ✠ Service Schedule ✠ ✠ ✠

Sunday, November 15th. **23rd Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 6.** Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias, Samonas, and Abibus, of Edessa (299-306). Martyrs Elpidius, Marcellus, and Eustochius, who suffered under Julian the Apostate (4th c.). Martyr Demetrius of Thrace (ca.307). Ven. Paisii (Paisius) Velichkovsky (1794).

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am

Epistle: Eph. 2:4-10; Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Beginning of the Nativity Fast

Wednesday, November 18th.

Daily Vespers, 5:30 pm. Meal and Study Group to follow: Bishop Kallistos Ware's *The Inner Kingdom*.

Friday, November 20th. **Forefeast of the Entry of the Most-holy Theotokos into the Temple.**

All-night Vigil Service: 6:00 pm.

Saturday, November 21st.

Great Vespers of the Resurrection: 5:00 pm

Sunday, November 22nd. **24th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 7. Afterfeast of the Entry into the Temple.**

Apostles of the Seventy Philemon and Archippus, Martyr Apphia, wife of Philemon and Equal-to-the-Apostles, and Onesimus, disciple of St Paul (1st c.). Martyrdom of St Michael, Prince of Tver' (1318). Rt Blv Yaropolk, In Baptism Peter, Prince of Vladimir in Volyn' (1086). Martyrs Cecilia, Valerian, Tiburtinius, and Maximus, at Rome (c.230).

Martyr Procopius the Reader, at Caesarea in Palestine (303). Martyr Menignus at Parium (250). St Agabbas of Syria (5th c.). Righteous Michael the Soldier, of Byulgaria (866). Ven Callistus Xanthopoulos (Mt Athos – 1363).

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Upcoming Services

Tuesday, November 24th. **Akathist of Thanksgiving, "Glory to God for All Things": 6:00 pm.**

Wednesday, November 25th. **There will be no Daily Vespers on this date.**

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Promises Kept: The Feast of the Entry of the Most-holy Theotokos into the Temple

November 21

The Feast of the Entrance of the Most-holy Theotokos into the Temple commemorates Mary's being brought as a small child by her parents Joachim and Anna into the Temple, there to live among the virgins consecrated to God until the time of their betrothal. According to the Tradition of the Church, Mary was led into the Holy of Holies, there to be nourished by the angels in order that she might become the sanctuary and the living temple, in whom the Christ child was to be born.

In this, many promises are fulfilled. The main theme of the Feast of the Entrance is that Mary, in going into the Temple made of stone, becomes the living temple of God, thus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies that God will dwell among men and that the human person is the sole proper temple of God (Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 37:27). Mary's parents Joachim and Anna fulfilled their promise when they dedicated their daughter to God. In entering the Temple Mary is an example of a life set apart from the world, a life dedicated to God, a life of intimate communion with God. Mary is an image for us of submitting to God's will and of becoming the dwelling place of God.

God's specific promises to us are fulfilled; the words of the Prophets come to pass through the submission of Mary and her parents to the will of God: "On the feast of the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple the first reading at Vespers is from the book of Exodus (40:1-5, 9-10, 16, 34-35) and refers to God's commandment concerning the tabernacle of witness and everything that was to be placed in it. This is because the Holy Mother of God is the true tabernacle of witness... – and because she entered the holy of holies in the Temple. The second reading is the account from the first book of Kings (7:51-8:11) of how the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord was brought into the holy of holies in the Temple after its construction. The third reading is from the Prophet Ezekiel (43:27-44:4) and speaks of the closed gate towards the east, a reference to the perpetual virginity of the Holy Mother of God." (Hierotheos, *Hesychia and Theology*, pp.227-228) Each of these readings ends with the phrase "the glory of the Lord filled the house (Temple)." As Mary is the living temple and is filled with the glory of God, so we too are filled when we, as the festal Gospel proclaims "hear the word of God and keep it!" By submitting to the will of God as Mary did, we become temples of the living God.

For you are a temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they shall be my people.' (2 Corinthians 6:16)

"Listen, O daughter, behold and incline your ear.
And forget your people and your father's house;
For the King desired your beauty,
For He is your Lord...

All her glory as the King's daughter is within,
Adorned and embroidered with golden tassels.
The virgins behind her shall be brought to the King;
Her neighbors shall be brought to You;
They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing;
They shall be led into the temple of the King.
In place of your fathers, sons shall be born to you;
You shall make them rulers over all the earth.

They shall remember your name from generation to generation;
Therefore, peoples shall give thanks to you
Forever and unto ages of ages.

Psalm 44: 11-12,14-18

The Feast of the Entrance of the Most-holy Theotokos into the Temple and the All-night Vigil

“The All-night Vigil expresses with absolute clarity the spirit of Orthodoxy, something described in the teaching of the Holy Fathers of the Church as ‘the spirit of Resurrection, Transfiguration, and Deification of man’. The All-night Vigil, as does Orthodox Christianity in general, contains the expression of two Passovers, the Passover of the Crucifixion and the Passover of the Resurrection. The All-night Vigil, especially as conducted on the eve of Sunday, the Day of Resurrection, takes its structure and subject matter from the services of Passion Week and the Week of Pashka. Vladimir Ilin writes the following in his book on the All-night Vigil, published in Paris in the 1920s: ‘The All-night Vigil and its soul, the Jerusalem Typicon, the Eye of the Church, grew and were completed at the Tomb of the Lord. Overall, it is the night services at the Tomb of the Lord that are the cradle from which grew a marvelous garden, the daily cycle of Orthodox services. Its finest flower is the All-night Vigil. If the source of the Orthodox Liturgy is the Mystical Supper of Christ, held in the home of Joseph of Arimathea, then the source of the All-night Vigil is at the life-giving Tomb of the Lord, which opened the way for the world into the heavenly mansions and poured out onto men the blessedness of life eternal.’”

- Archpriest Victor Potapov, Russian Orthodox Cathedral of
St John the Baptist, Washington, DC

Our participation in the All-night Vigil brings us into communion with the promises of God: like the Theotokos, we can become ‘living temples’ here in this world; and, in dying with Christ, we will also be raised with Him. The All-night Vigil is composed of both Great Vespers and Matins. Great Vespers brings us back to the creation. St Paul reminds us that we are a new creation, we are ‘living temples’. Matins, the service of the new day, brings us to the Day of Resurrection.