

# SOBORNOST

**St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church**

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*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## SERVICES

**Saturday: Confession 4:30 PM**

**Great Vespers 5:00 PM**

**Sunday: Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM**

**August 21, 2022 – 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost | Apostle Thaddeus of the Seventy | Afterfeast of the Dormition**

*“For who else should I fashion a crown Thaddaeus?” said your eye-witnesses as an initiate of the Word. On the twenty-first Thaddaeus flew away from life.*

The Holy Apostle Jude was one of the Twelve Disciples of the Lord. Although he bears the same name as Judas Iscariot who betrayed the Lord, in English his name has been shortened to Jude, while Judas is the Greek translation of the Hebrew name Judah. The New Testament distinguishes him with various names.

"Jude of James" is only mentioned twice in the New Testament: in the lists of apostles in Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13. The Epistle of Jude states that it was written by "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James" (Jude 1:1). This James was the brother of Jude and of the Lord and the first Bishop of Jerusalem, who was martyred by being thrown from the pinnacle of the Temple.

The Gospel of John also once mentions a disciple called "Judas, not the Iscariot", who asks Jesus, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22). This is often accepted to be the same person as the Apostle Jude.

In the apostolic lists of Matthew 10:3 and Mark 3:18, Jude is omitted, but there is a Thaddeus (or in some manuscripts of Matthew 10:3, "Lebbaeus who was surnamed



Thaddaeus") listed in his place. This has led many Christians since early times to harmonize the lists by positing a "Jude Thaddeus", known by either name. This is made plausible by the fact that "Thaddeus" seems to be a nickname. While Lebbaeus means "ardent", for Jude united himself to Jesus with all his heart, Thaddaeus means "he who renders praise", for he glorified and rendered praise to Christ. Thaddeus, one of the Twelve Disciples, is often indistinguishable from Thaddeus of Edessa, one of the Seventy Apostles who converted Edessa and delivered the image of Christ Not-Made-With-Hands to King Abgar and is celebrated on August 21st.

Jude was the son of Joseph, who was betrothed to the Theotokos, whose actual mother was Salome, daughter of Haggai, the son of Barachiah, a brother Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist and Forerunner. In John 7:5 we are told that Jude, being one of the brothers of Christ, did not initially believe in the message of Christ. John 14:22 may indicate that Jude did come to believe in Christ's message before His Holy Passion. Conscious of his former sins of lack of faith and brotherly love, he later wrote: "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James" (Jude 1:1), not daring to call himself a brother of the Lord, but instead confessing that He was the Lord incarnate without an earthly brother according to the flesh.

Jude married a woman named Mariam, and we are told by the historian Eusebius that during the reign of Dometian (81-96) two grandsons of the Apostle Jude were brought before the emperor himself, who based on the slanders of heretics was afraid they posed some political danger to him. When the emperor examined them and saw that they simply toiled in the working of the land, he set them free as they posed no danger to him.

The historian Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos writes of Jude: "The divine Jude, who had the dual title of Thaddaeus and Labbaeus, the son of Joseph and brother of James who was cast down from the pinnacle of the Temple of Jerusalem, preached the gospel and disseminated Christianity first in Judaea, Galilee, Samaria, Idumaea, and afterwards in Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia. Finally, he came to the city of Edessa, which belonged to King Abgar, where the gospel had been preached before him by another Thaddaeus, one of the Seventy Apostles. There, the Apostle Jude set about and completed what had not been finished by that Thaddaeus."

Laboring in this manner for the enlightenment of the pagan peoples and converting them from their former superstitions to the light of the true knowledge of Christ, he made his way to the lands around Mount Ararat, where he converted a multitude of people to Christianity. Having stirred up the pagan unbelievers, there they seized

him and subjected him to tortures. Then they hung him up and shot arrows through him. In this way he delivered his soul into the hands of God, and received from Him the unfading crown of martyrdom. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16 EOB**

Brethren, I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we are made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and people. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You have honor, but we have dishonor. Even to this present hour, we hunger and thirst, we are naked, beaten and [we] wander from place to place! We work hard, with our own hands. When people curse us, we bless [in return]. When we are persecuted, we endure. When we are defamed, we try to conciliate. We are made as the filth of the world, as the dirt wiped off by all, even until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For although you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet [you do] not [have] many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I became your father through the Good News. I beg you therefore, be imitators of me.

### **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Matthew 17:14-23 EOB**

At that time, when they came to the crowd, a man came to Jesus. He knelt down before him and said: "Lord, have mercy on my son! He is epileptic and suffers terribly as he often falls into the fire and in the water. And so, I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." Jesus answered, "Faithless and perverse generation! How much longer must I be with you? How long must I bear with you? Bring him to me." When Jesus rebuked it, the demon went out of the boy and he was cured from that hour. Then, the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why were we not able to cast it out?" He replied, "Because of your unbelief! Amen, I tell you that if you have faith [even] like a grain of mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you! But this kind [of spirit] does not go out except by prayer and fasting." While they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and the third day, he will be raised up." They were extremely distressed.

## **A Word From the Holy Fathers**

"Mary has chosen that good part" (Luke 10:42). The Dormition of the Mother of God represents a good end to such a choice. The Savior Himself received her soul in His arms at her Dormition. Many saints were made worthy of the same. In various ways and degrees, all those who choose that good part meet with this. At

the time this choice was made, the saints foresaw this end through hope, and even felt it to a certain degree; but then come labors, struggle and forcing oneself, shrouding the chosen path. The good end of that good part remains as a guiding star. It is as a faraway shining light for a traveler who is overtaken by darkness. Hope is the stimulator of energy and the maintainer of patience and constancy in what was begun, while hope itself is strong through faith. People make their choice according to faith, and through hope they are firm in their choice; while through patience they attain that good end.

– St. Theophan the Recluse

## **"In Falling Asleep You Did Not Abandon the World, O Theotokos"**

By His Eminence Metropolitan Nikodemos (Ballendras) of Patras

The Falling Asleep in the Lord of the Most Holy Theotokos is celebrated today by the Orthodox Church everywhere. The mournful event of falling-asleep retreats and a sublime jubilation takes its place. The sacred hymn-writer offers a first explanation of the joyful side of the present Feast, when he says "in falling asleep you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos."

1. According to holy tradition this outlook and conviction, that the All-holy Theotokos did not abandon the faithful people of God after her falling asleep, was taught and suggested by her to the Apostles, and through the Apostles it was transmitted to subsequent generations including our own. Our Church has preserved from this tradition – especially in her hymnology – the main incidents in the falling asleep of the Theotokos.

When the Lord reckoned that the fullness of time had come to call His All-holy Mother from the earth to heaven, and place her beside Him, He sent her a message with the Archangel (Gabriel), which is regarded as a second annunciation. It was indeed a joyful gospel message, because it informed her that she would soon meet again with her Son in heaven and stay with Him forever.

The idea of death – and the mystery of death itself – which grips human beings with fear and agony when they encounter it, had no place in the thought and heart of the Theotokos. The reason for this was that she was completely driven by feelings of heavenly joy, since she realized that the time had come for her to be close to her Son once again. So, she immediately engaged in human preparations. She kissed good-by her beloved relatives, distributed her meager belongings to pious women, and gave instructions concerning her funeral.

Then a miraculous event took place: "The Apostles, gathered at Gethsemane from the ends of the world," to bury her immaculate body, while she called upon the invisible presence of her Son, saying her final words "and You, my Son and my

God, receive my spirit." It was exactly in this way that the All-holy Theotokos delivered her spirit to the hands of the Lord, surrounded by the holy Apostles.

2. It was natural, humanly speaking, that the Apostles would express their sadness to her for her departure, and their sense of being orphaned now that, after the Ascension of the Lord that had preceded, they would be also deprived of the bodily presence and consolation of His All-holy Mother, whom, as is easy to understand, they regarded as their Mother as well. And also, that she would assure them that from heaven too she would continue to be near them and to support them maternally forever.

It is also certain that for us Christians the same maternal support and protection from the All-holy Mother of the Lord is applicable; and that it would not be far from reality if we imagined that she addresses to us the same consoling words which the Lord had addressed earlier: "It is to your advantage that I depart" (John 16:7), "I will not leave you orphaned" (John 14:18). Indeed, we have many indications that "in falling asleep she did not abandon the world" because the Theotokos, "being the Mother of Life was translated into Life."

She who gave birth to the Leader of life as man, does not submit herself to death, but "has passed from death into Life" (John 5:24). As the sacred hymn writer expressly states, "grave and mortality did not prevail over her, because being the Mother of life Christ led her into life." She did not remain in the grave. She was transported to heaven. "Death was swallowed up in victory"; death was conquered in her person (I Cor. 15:54).

3. So, the All-holy Theotokos entered into her glory. "As Mother of God she is glorified both in heaven and on earth" by angels and human beings – the Church "triumphant" in heaven and "militant" on the earth – and she has been exalted to the height of glory by her Son. "Having obtained maternal boldness towards Him" she has the exceptional privilege to grant to the world protection and covering, her mediations and help to those who turn to her and invoke her name.

She is our "mediator" towards Christ, supporting our prayers and supplications with maternal love and with a welcomed and potent intercession to Him on our behalf. Her constant and protecting advocacy is a given. As long as we pursue the way of holiness we attract her sympathy all the more; because it is easily understood and quite obvious that the All-holy Theotokos feels greater kinship with those who follow her path – which is always the path of holiness. Consequently, we are called in this way to develop our own filial relation to her, so as to prove ourselves being her genuine and beloved children, since "He [Christ] who sanctifies and those [Christians] who are sanctified are all from One [Father]"

(Heb. 2:11) and become brethren of Christ and, therefore, children of His All-holy Mother.

My dear fellow Christians, the life in Christ is crowned by the death in Christ (falling-asleep); and both lead to "eternal life" and heavenly blessedness. Living according to Christ with such a direction and perspective, we, the celebrants of the All-holy Theotokos, will acquire in every step of our lives tangible verifications that "The superlatively holy Theotokos did not abandon the world when she fell asleep in the Lord." (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

### **Also Commemorated Today: Martyr Bassa of Edessa and her sons Theognis, Agapius, and Pistus**

The Martyr Bassa (or Vassa) with her sons Theognis, Agapius and Pistus, lived in the city of Macedonian Edessa and she was married to a pagan priest. From childhood she had been raised in the Christian Faith, which she passed on to her sons.

During the reign of the emperor Maximian Galerius (305-311), the husband denounced his wife and children to the governor. In spite of threats, the boys refused to offer sacrifice to idols, so they were tortured and put to death. The eldest son, Theognis, was raked with iron claws, then he was beheaded. The skin of the young Agapius was flayed from head to chest, but the martyr did not utter a sound. The youngest son Pistus was tortured and beheaded, just as his brothers had been. One account says that the three brothers suffered at Edessa in Macedonia. Another account says they died at Larissa in Thessaly, their homeland.

Saint Bassa was thrown into prison and was weakened by hunger, but an angel strengthened her with heavenly food. Under successive tortures she remained unharmed by fire, water and beasts. When they brought her to a pagan temple, she shattered the statue of Zeus. Then they threw the martyr into a whirlpool in the sea. But to everyone's surprise a ship sailed up, and three radiant men pulled her up (Saint Nikódēmos of the Holy Mountain (July 14) suggests that these were her children, martyred earlier). After eight days Saint Bassa came by ship to the governor of the island of Alona, not far from Cyzicus, in the Propontis or Sea of Marmora. After beating her with rods, they beheaded her.

By the year 450 there was already a church in honor of the holy martyr Bassa at Chalcedon. (*from oca.org*)

### **Social Team for August 28**

Team 8 is up next week - Samson, Brady, Wyman, Joseph Frey. Thank you!

### **Follow Our Diocese On-Line**

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***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Jon Church, Tina Crull, Mary Diane David, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Dcn. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine, the newly reposed servants of God Sarah Comfort and BJ Weber, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)