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STS. CYRIL AND METHODY
MACEDONO-BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

AUGUST 2024



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TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
August 6th

The feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord (Greek: Μεταμόρφωσις) is one of the twelve feasts of the Lord which the Church celebrates throughout the year. The day is dedicated to one of the most sacramental events in all of Gospel history, the Transfiguration of Christ.



† PROCESSION OF THE LIFE- GIVING CROSS - AUG. 1



ORIGIN OF THE FEAST

Due to the frequent illnesses in August in Constantinople since ancient times there was a custom to carry the Holy and Life-giving Cross along the roads and streets to sanctify the places and chase away illnesses. From that day on, until the Assumption, they made litanies all over the city and then left the Cross before the people for worship. This custom, combined with the other custom in Constantinople of the blessing of the water in the court church of Constantinople on the first day of each month (except January, when the blessing took place on the 6th, Epiphany, and September, when it took place on the 14th, the Feast of the Holy Cross), was the basis of the feast in honor of the Holy and Life-giving Cross of the Lord and of the solemn blessing of the water in the springs, which took place on August 1.

For this reason, it has been customary since ancient times to hold a festive water blessing service on this day!





Soon after the Savior reveals to His disciples that He will be captured, tortured, killed, and He will resurrected on the third day, He took three of them - Peter, John, and James - led them out to Mount Tabor, and was transfigured before them. Christ's face shines brighter than the sun, and His clothes become white as light. Two of the greatest Old Testament prophets, Moses and Elijah, appear alongside Christ and speak to Him of the death He is about to endure. As they talk, a bright cloud overshadowed them and a voice was heard:

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him.”

The scene of Christ's transfiguration is similarly described by three of the four evangelists. All three Synoptic Gospels give a brief and roughly identical description of what happened (Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28). St. John Chrysostom made an interesting interpretation of one of the most frequently asked questions concerning the description of the Transfiguration

of Christ, which is: why exactly did Moses and Elijah appear with Him and not someone else? The answer lies in the words of Christ, who often said that “the Law and the Prophets” testify to Him and that He did not come to break “the Law and the Prophets” but to fulfill them. The appearance, therefore, of two of the most eminent of the Old Testament prophets, Moses, personifying the Law, and Elijah, personifying prophecy, is fully explicable and intentional. Moses, who alone received the Law from the Lord, and Elijah, who was the first and greatest of the prophets.

The Feast of the Transfiguration began to be celebrated in the East as early as the 4th century. The feast probably began in Palestine, and from there gradually spread to other regions. This is confirmed by the fact that in the 4th cent. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great, built a church on Mount Tabor dedicated to the Transfiguration.





It is believed that the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was established by the Apostles. Records of the miraculous ascension in the flesh of the Mother of God to heaven date back to the 4th century. It is mentioned by Blessed Augustine and Jerome, and the Patriarch Juvenal of Jerusalem (420-458) confirmed the authenticity of these accounts to the Emperor Marcian. The day of celebration of the Assumption was established by Emperor Maurice (592-602).

The Blessed Virgin's blessed Dormition is glorified in the canons of St. Paul, St. Cosmas of Mayum, and St. John Damascene.

Since ancient times, the feast has been preceded by a fast that unites two ancient fasts: some Christians fasted before the feast of the Transfiguration, while others fasted before the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Council of Constantinople,

convened in the twelfth century during the reign of Patriarch Luke, appointed all Christians to observe the Dormition Fast from the first to the fifteenth of August.

The feast lasts nine days; it ends on August 23 (see calendar).

The oldest place associated with the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Church of the Assumption in Jerusalem. It was erected in the 4th century on the spot where, according to tradition, the body of the Mother of God was laid in the Garden of Gethsemane. The oldest place associated with the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Church of the Assumption in Jerusalem. It was erected in the 4th century on the spot where, according to tradition, the body of the Mother of God was laid in the Garden of Gethsemane. However, the surviving stonework dates from the 11th century when the Crusaders renovated the old church.