

Date: August 11, 2022

Subject: BURL-Choir Procession of the Holy Cross Weekend NOTICE

Dorogiye!

This Saturday / Sunday the Church commemorates the Procession of the Holy Cross. The attached Tropar / Kondak text sheet includes the Tropari and Kondaki for the commemoration.

Next week on Thursday / Friday, the Church celebrates the Transfiguration of the Lord (Preobrazheniye), one of the 12-Great (Dvundesatyi) Holy days of the Church year.

Brief summaries about the Procession of the Holy Cross, and the Transfiguration of the Lord (Preobrazheniye) are provided below.

**** PROCESSION OF THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS OF THE LORD

The origin of this Feast is explained in the Greek Horologion of 1897: "Because of the illnesses which occur during the month of August, it was customary at Constantinople to carry the Precious Wood of the Cross in procession throughout the city for its sanctification, and to deliver it from sickness."

On the eve (July 31), the Cross was removed from the imperial treasury and placed it upon the Holy Table of the Great Church of Hagia Sophia (which is dedicated to Christ, the Wisdom of God). From August 1 until the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, there was a procession throughout the entire the city, and then the Cross was placed where all the people could venerate it.

In the Russian Church this Feast is combined with the remembrance of the Baptism of Rus on August 1, 988. In the "The order of services for the holy, catholic, and apostolic Great Church of the Dormition," which was compiled in 1627 by order of Patriarch Philaret of Moscow and All Rus, there is a similar explanation of the Feast: "On the day of the Procession of the Precious Cross there is a Cross Procession with the Sanctification of Water, for the enlightenment of the people, in all the towns and places."

Knowledge of the day of the actual Baptism of Rus is preserved in the Chronicles of the XVI century: "The Baptism of the Great Prince Vladimir of Kiev and of all Rus took place on August 1."

In the current practice of the Russian Church, the service of the Lesser Sanctification of Water on August 1 takes place either before or after Liturgy. Because of the Blessing of Water, this first Feast of the Savior in August is sometimes called "the Savior of the Water." Along with the Blessing of Water, there may also be a Blessing of Honey (thus it is also called "the Savior of the Honey)," because on this day, the newly-gathered honey is blessed and tasted.

**** TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

In order to strengthen the faith of His disciples when they would see His suffering, Jesus Christ took three disciples, Peter, James and John, and led them up on a high mountain to pray. According to ancient Church Tradition, it was the beautiful Mount Tabor covered with luxurious growth from the foot to the summit.

As the Savior was praying, the disciples slept from fatigue. When they woke up, they saw Jesus Christ transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun and His garments became white as snow and glistened as light. There, two prophets, Moses and Elijah, in heavenly glory appeared with Him, and they were talking with Jesus about the suffering and death, which He would have to endure in Jerusalem. Extraordinary joy filled the hearts of the disciples during this time. Peter exclaimed, "Lord, it is well that we are here. If you wish, I will make three booths here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah," not understanding what He was saying. Suddenly, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and they heard the voice of God the Father saying, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"

When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces. Jesus Christ came to them, touched them, and said, "Rise, and have no fear." When the disciples lifted up their eyes, they saw Jesus Christ as He usually appeared.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus Christ commanded them to tell no one about the vision until He was raised from the dead.

The Holy Orthodox Church celebrates the glorious Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ, on August 6th (August 19 NS). This day is one of the major feast days. By His Transfiguration, the Savior has showed us how people become in the future life, in the Kingdom of Heaven, if they follow God's Law and how the entire earthly world would be transfigured. The Lord also reminds us that we can be transfigured even now if we lead a truly Christian life.

On the Feast of Transfiguration, after the Liturgy, fruit is brought to the church to be blessed for eating: grapes and, in general, fruit from orchards such as apples, pears, and plums in order to ask the Lord's blessing on the fruits of the harvest.

Troparion of the Feast

Thou was transfigured on the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Thy disciples Thy glory as each one could endure; shine forth Thou on us, who are sinners all, Thy light ever-unending through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Light-giver, glory to Thee.

Kontakion of the Feast

On the mount Thou was transfigured, and Thy disciples, as much as they could bear, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; so that, when they would see Thee crucified, they would know Thy passion to be willing and would preach to the world that Thou, in truth, are the Effulgence of the Father.