

01/08/2020

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco - Reflection for the Dormition of the Theotokos



Beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

On August 1 when we begin the Fast of the Dormition, we are provided with the opportunity to focus our attention on the life of the Theotokos, her obedience to God, and her examples of humility and selflessness. As we fast during these days of August, we can also emulate these traits in our own lives, using this time to turn away from ourselves, turn towards God, and become doers and keepers of His word.

This is also a time to reflect on the state of our world and how desperately it needs our prayers. In the Paraklesis Services that are offered during these days, we call

upon the Theotokos crying out, ***"Hasten not for we are lost in the host of our errors."*** During these days, we turn to the Theotokos as we would turn to our own mother, asking for her help and comfort in difficult times. As one of the verses sings out, ***"Deliver us, from dangers... After God, we all flee to you for shelter and covering, as an unshakeable wall and our protection."***

Our Fast this year provides us with an opportunity to consider the economic devastation of the pandemic on so many levels, and the economic inequities in our nation. As you simplify your diet, reflect on those whose diets are even more meager. As you make your grocery list, pray for those who are responsible for providing it, from their farm to your table. Then, use this period to offer philanthropic and charitable support to those who need help and to the causes which strive to end poverty in our nation.

In the midst of this Fast, we also celebrate another great Feast, the Transfiguration of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when He ascended to Mount Tabor with his disciples, Peter, James and John. There it was revealed to them the divinity of Christ, as he appeared with Moses and Elijah. The Transfiguration demonstrates the possibility of Theosis which will be made manifest in all those who persevere in the faith.

Our Church places these seasons of feasting and fasting to call us to greater devotion to the Lord and to the Gospel He proclaimed. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus opened the Book of Isaiah, and read to the people of Nazareth, ***"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*** (Luke 4:18-19).

The Theotokos, with her motherly love and care, is always interceding before her Son and Our God for each of us. Let us honor her life by observing this Fast, and using this time to reflect on how we can better live out our life in Christ, following her examples of devotion and dedication.

To all those celebrate their Feast on the Transfiguration holiday and Dormition holiday, I wish you Hronia Polla and may God Bless You!

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