

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church
Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith

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***Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America,
Diocese of the Midwest***

JULY 28, 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: Rom 10:1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire, and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.



Jesus heals 2 demon possessed men

GOSPEL: Mt 8:28-9:1

At that time, Jesus came to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And

suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So, the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.” And He said to them, “Go.” So, when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So, He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK

MON. July 29	Martyr Callinicus of Gangra in Asia Minor; Rom 16:17-24, 16:21, Mt 13:10-23
TUE. July 30	Apostle Silas and Silvanus of the Seventy; 1 Cor 1:1-9, Mt 13:24-30
WED. July 31	Forefeast of the Procession of the Honorable and Lifegiving Cross; Righteous Joseph of Arimathea; 1 Cor 2:9-3:8, Mt 13:31-36
THU. Aug 1	Procession of the Honorable Wood of the Life-Giving Cross; 7 Holy Maccabee Martyrs; 1 Cor 3:18-23, Mt 13:36-43
FRI. Aug 2	Translation of the relics of the Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen; 1 Cor 4:5-8, Mt 13:44-54
SAT. Aug 3	Venerable Isaac the Ascetic; Rom 9:1-5, Mt 9:18-26
SUN. Aug 4	6th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, <i>Tone 5</i>
9:10 AM	HOURS
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee Hour

FOR YOUR PRAYERS



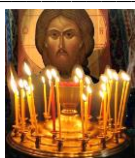
Debby Pinta, P. O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; **Tony Monastra**, 2119 Willow Cove Marblehead, OH 43440; **Patti Owens**, 311 Woodbridge Road, Vermilion, OH 44089; **Basil Glovinsky**, 1007 Glendale Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452; **Subdeacon Roger Pinta**, P.O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; **Ed & Irene Vangeloff**, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870

JULY CANDLE SPONSORS



Altar Candles: Barbara Wroblewski, Happy 29th Wedding Anniversary to Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle (\$50); **Chandelier:** Natalie and Greg Twarek, In Thanksgiving (\$50); **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For Health & God’s Blessings for Walter Wroblewski (\$25); **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, In birthday memory of Susan (\$20); **Candles at St. Tikhon Icon:** For Safety and Health of Nicholas, Tikhon, Gleice, Sophie & Chloe (\$20)

VIGILS FOR July 21



Angela Bricker 2 For the Orthodox church and her catechumens, Special intention family

Susan Guzy 1 Anniversary blessings and many years to Natalie & Greg, Safe travels for brother Gary

Laura Kovach 5 For health and/or healing of Donnie S., Elaine R., Betty K., Debby P., David M., Patti O., Jim K., Ruth S., James W., Tony M., Hannah S., Barbara D., Pauline O., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Sharon D., John D., Karen D., Kathie J., and Jennifer H.

Anniversary blessings to Fr. Peter on his ordination to the priesthood.

Anniversary blessings and many years to Natalie & Greg.

In birthday memory of Susan.

Safe travel for family.

Dennis Lapso 5 Blessed repose of cousin Miron Breznocak who passed this morning (7/20), Memory Eternal of Annette Ressetar Lapso, Eternal Memory of Prof Ressetar, Eternal Memory of Caroline Ressetar, Health of Matushka Theodora Ressetar

Sandy Martin 1 Special intentions

Natalie Twarek 8 In loving remembrance of my Mom, 51 years, God's blessings to Fr Peter on the anniversary of his ordination, For the health and recovery of Elaine Roth and Mary Dziak, For the health and recovery of Betty Kovach, For the health and recovery of Carol, Kayla, Bill, Ruth, Pam, Debbie, Ron, Jim, Michelle, Terrie, Theresa, Clayton, Father Emilian, For the health of Matushka Melania, Patrick and Marty, Mike Heffernan and Barbara Heffernan, Health and healing for Father's dad Michal and Matushka's mom Barbara, For the health of Tony, Bev, Ed, Irene, Father David, Pauline, Judy, Tina, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Tina's dad, Earl, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat

Fr. David Hannes - Vigils for Transfiguration In Remembrance of Diane Tryon



JULY REPOSED

Mary Danchisen (1927) No date provided; Michael Wolf (1929) No date provided; Triantafilos Lefas (1995) No date provided; **2-** John Danchisen (2009); **6-** Anna Mazur (1969); **6-** Joseph Golob Jr (2006); **7-** Mary Martha Glovinsky (1975); **9-** Andrew Holodnak (1971); **10-** Gretta Gresh (2018); **14-** John Gulla (1968); **20-** Mitered Archpriest Sava Chaly (1991) Former Pastor; **21-** Anna Mazurik (1973); **27-** Father Vladimir Meschersky (1937) Former Pastor; **29-** Sally Franklin (2018); **29-** Robert Zgonc (2018); **29-** Charles Hagmaier (2018)

ATTENDANCE



07/20 Vespers, **9** attending (4 guests); **07/21** Divine Liturgy, **45** attending (24 guests)



JULY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

30 – Tim & Jennifer Heffernan Anniversary; **30** – Dale & Angela Bricker Anniversary

PRAYER LIST

Parishioners & Family: Jennifer Heffernan / Tom Hileman / Pam / Jim Twarek / Ed Garrity / Patti Owens / Tony Monastra / Barbara Wroblewski / Michal Tomáš / Ruth Sheller / Basil Glovinsky / Dale / Sophie / Jeanne Smith / Carol / David Martin / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon / Subdeacon Roger Pinta / Ed Vangeloff / Irene Vangeloff / Sonja Rose / Ron Royhab / James Bargdill / John Beadle / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Elaine Hileman / Betty Kovach / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / George Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Clifford / Gleice, Sophie & Chloe / Carol / Debbie & Marco / Nora.

Other Requests: Sharyn Osborne / Christine Zahm / Amy / Bill Byrnes / Michael Heffernan / Susanne / Barbara Heffernan / Rita Mumea / Charles Schlett / Kathy Debevits / Maxwell Chaney / Sidharth Bijilani – friend of Subdeacon Roger and Debbie Pinta / Anthony / Archpriest Ján Čížmár / Archpriest David Lis / Archpriest Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Robert Piznar / Mark Masica / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Chris.

Military: Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military



READERS LIST

Sunday Jul 28 – Jake
Sunday Aug 4 – Tim
Sunday Aug 11 – Joe



COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR LIST

July 28 – Greg
August 4 – Natalia
Aug 11 – Mat. Michelle & Fr. Peter
Sep 15 – Mat. Michelle & Fr. Peter

Please sign up to host coffee hour after the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Signup sheet is located in the Social Hall.



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

“Respect for Life Ministries” is the charity we donate to for the month of July.



CLEANING SCHEDULE

July 29, Angela
Aug 5, Angela
Aug 12, Angela
Aug 19, Angela



SUNDAY OFFERING

Sunday, July 21, 2024

Tithe	\$1,817.00
Donations	\$ 264.00
Candles	\$ 77.00
Vigils	\$ 100.00
Respect for Life (July)	\$ 100.00
Chandelier	\$ 50.00
Total:	\$2,408.25

May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!

CHURCH MONTHLY INCOME AND EXPENSES

Month of JUNE 2024	
Church Donation income was	\$ 9,531.00
Church Operating Expenses totaled	<u>\$15,422.51</u>
net loss of	- \$ 5,891.51



SPECIAL PARISH MEETING

Special Parish Meeting will be held on **Sunday, August 4th**, following the Divine Liturgy. We will discuss and ask to approve a major expenditure that are planned for this year. Presence of all voting members in good standing is requested. Please mark your calendars, and plan to attend this important meeting! This is the **fifth** announcement.



67th ANNUAL HALUPKI FESTIVAL

Festival raffle tickets are available. We are asking each parish household to sell at least 20 raffle tickets at \$5 each. Please ask your friends and family **‘how many tickets** they would like to purchase,’ not **if** they want any... approach is everything! Thank you in advance for your help!



MARKET DAY

Our next Market Day will take place next **Saturday, August 3rd** starting with set up at **8:00 AM**. We will have perohi, kielbasa and kraut, halupki, spanakopita, and a large variety of baked goods. Your help is greatly appreciated!



ANNUAL PEACH SOCIAL

The Annual Peach Social will take place at St. Paul Lutheran Church on **Saturday, August 10th** from **4:00 – 6:30 pm**. See the flyer on the bulletin board.



THANK YOU

We would like to express our sincere thanks to **Ryan Stamp** for assembling our new parish grill. May Our Lord and God reward him abundantly for his care, love of our church and grant him Many Happy and Blessed Years!

UP-COMING EVENTS IN OUR PARISH – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



- Aug 3rd** Market Day 8:00 AM (*Saturday*)
- Aug 4th** Special Parish Meeting after the Divine Liturgy (*Sunday*)
- Aug 6th** Transfiguration of Our Lord – Blessing of Fruits (*Tuesday*)
- Aug 15th** Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos – Procession with the shroud and blessing of flowers (*Thursday*)
- Aug 18th** 67th Annual Halupki Festival (*Sunday*)



DORMITION FAST

On **Aug. 1** we begin a two-week fast in honor of the Holy Theotokos, in preparation for the celebration of her holy Dormition (falling asleep). Our fast ends on **August 14th** the day we celebrate the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The Dormition fast is short, but is stricter than all the other fasting periods except Great Lent. We fast on all days from the usual non-lenten foods, such as all animal products (meat, poultry, milk, cheese, etc.) and olive oil and wine. In addition, we also abstain from fish on all days of the fast, including weekends, except for the feast of the Transfiguration, when we may ease our fasting by having fish, wine and olive oil. On the two weekends which fall during the fast (Saturday and Sunday), the fast is relaxed a little bit, and we may have wine, and olive oil, but no fish.



SINCERE THANK YOU!

Our sincere thanks are extended to **Natalie, Tina, Laura, Jim, Susan, Natalia, Sandy, and Rodie** for helping Matushka Michelle and Fr. Peter to set up and take away the canopies and tables, the kids water slides and games, preparing food and salads, and helping with serving and cleaning afterwards during the Deanery gathering of Clergy and wives last Tuesday, July 23rd. May Our Lord reward you all for your kindness, generosity and big help with His special blessings!

MATUSHKA'S CORNER

Do not resent, do not react, keep inner stillness

Here are some Orthodox tips for keeping faith and praying during difficult times:

Prayer of Stillness

This prayer can involve memories of past hurts, sins, resentments, images, and sensations. Here are some tips for the Prayer of Stillness:

- Sit down and collect yourself.
- Remember that God is present.
- Say the Trisagion Prayers.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply.
- Quiet down and pray.
- Confess sins.

Trusting God

Here are some practical ways to trust God in your everyday life:

- Seek truth in Scripture.
- Confess unbelief.
- Share your concerns with your community.
- Remember God and spend time with Him.
- Look for things to be grateful for.
- Walk in the Holy Spirit.
- Wait on the Lord.

Pray the Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.

In short, sit down and collect yourself, and remember that God is present. Say the Trisagion Prayers if you wish. Breathe in slowly and deeply a couple of times, following your breath to the center of your chest. Begin to say the Jesus Prayer quietly, slowly, until you have a sense of God's Presence. Then let the Jesus Prayer trail off, and go into silence. Thoughts will come, but simply let them go by. Don't let them grab your attention. But if they do, gently dismiss them and bring your focus back to God's Presence, perhaps using the Jesus Prayer to reestablish your intention to pray. Go deeper within yourself, below the thoughts, into the deeper stillness and awareness of Presence, and simply abide there.

For more information and guidance:

holycrossoca.org



Holy Apostles of the Seventy and Deacons: Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, and Parmenas

Commemorated on July 28

Saints Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon and Parmenas, Apostles of the Seventy were among the first deacons in the Church of Christ. In the Acts of the Holy Apostles (6:1-6) it is said that the twelve Apostles chose seven men: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicholas, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and appointed them to serve as deacons.

They are commemorated together on July 28, although they died at various times and in various places.

At first, Saint Prochorus accompanied the holy Apostle Peter, who made him bishop in the city of Nicomedia. After the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, Prochorus was a companion and coworker of the holy Apostle John the Theologian and was banished with him to the island of Patmos. There he wrote down the Book of Revelation concerning the final fate of the world. Upon returning to Nicomedia, Saint Prochorus converted pagans to Christ in the city of Antioch, where he suffered martyrdom.

Although Saint Nicanor suffered on the same day that the holy Protomartyr Stephen (December 27) and many other Christians were killed by stoning, he is also commemorated on December 28.

Saint Timon was later appointed by the Apostles as bishop of the city of Bostra in Arabia and suffered from the Jews and pagans for preaching the Gospel. He was thrown into a furnace, but by the power of God he came out of it unharmed. The tradition of the Roman Church says that Saint Timon died by crucifixion. Saint Timon is also commemorated on December 30.

Saint Parmenas zealously preached Christ in Macedonia. He died after being afflicted with an illness. Some say that Saint Parmenas suffered martyrdom under Trajan (98-117) in the final year of his reign.



The Practice of Exorcism in the Orthodox Church: History and the Present-Day Controversies

By Reader John Malov

In popular culture, exorcism is commonly associated with the Roman Catholic Church. In reality, this practice dates back thousands of years. In the undivided Church, exorcisms were routine and were entrusted to a separate category of the clergy. The rite of exorcism is also practised in the Orthodox Church. Moreover, from ancient times to the present day, it has been performed on every member of the Church. Keep reading to know more about the origins of exorcism and its practice throughout the history of Orthodoxy.

Examples from the Gospel and the Apostle

The Bible teaches us about the reality of demonic powers and presents multiple examples of casting out demons. The Saviour Himself healed several demon-possessed people (see Mt 8, Luke 8), some of whom had been brought to him by others (see Matthew 4:23-24).

Here, one should bear in mind three important points.

- Christ endowed His apostles with the power to drive out demons (cf. Luke 9:1-2) and He explicitly commanded them to use this power as He was sending them to preach (cf. Mt 10:5-8).

He also made it known that demonic forces existed, and we all had the duty to resist them. Moreover, in his last sermon before the Ascension, the Risen Lord called the ability to cast out demons a sign that follows those who believe (see Mk 16:17). Therefore, as long as there are believers, there must also be in the Church the practitioners of exorcism.

- He never entered any long conversations with the demons he was casting out. He limited himself to brief commands (cf. Luke 4:32-36), and rarely asked to know anything but their names. (cf. Mark 5:9).

Now the meaning of this fragment may not be evident to all, but it offers valuable insights into the practice of exorcism today.

- Exorcism is a gift that only a few people possess

In chapter 9 of the Gospel of Mark, the Apostle John tells Christ that his disciples have seen a man casting out demons in the name of Jesus Christ. The Apostles told him to stop because he was not one of them. But Christ disapproved of their intervention and told them to let that man continue what he was doing (see Mark 9:38-41). As the narrative shows, exorcism was accessible to men who did not



belong to the apostles and were not even members of the clergy, but who strongly believed in Christ.

Chapter 19 of the Book of Acts gives a different example. Some Jewish spell casters, sons of a high priest, attempted to drive out an evil spirit in the name of Christ with the words: “*We adjure you by the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches*”. They failed. From the body of the demon-possessed, the devil replied, “*I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?*”. Then he gave the men a beating. This episode guards us against the mystical perception of the Good News and the Name of Jesus.

Exorcism in the ancient Church and beyond

Originally, exorcism was a part of the preparation for baptism in catechetical schools. Nowadays, it is usually enough for someone willing to be baptised to ask for baptism, profess his faith and attend a few catechetical lectures. However, in ancient times, preparing for baptism could take years. Exorcism – or several acts of exorcism – was ordinarily performed on the catechumen before they were baptised. After Baptism, the rite of exorcism could only be performed on a Christian if they displayed clear signs of being possessed, or if they were good to suspect it.

Participation in several exorcisms during the weeks preceding Baptism was a requirement in the catechetical school of St Hippolytus, the Pope of Rome in the second and third centuries. In the Church of Jerusalem in the fourth century, every class session with the catechumen began with exorcism, and it was not uncommon to perform the ritual daily. Frequently, exorcism was the first ritual a baptism candidate was asked to undergo after requesting to be baptised.

Exorcism was given so much attention that in the minds of many candidates, it was one of the highest barriers to baptism they had to surmount. In his discourse on the Holy Baptism, St Gregory the Theologian advised the catechumen,

«Do not reject the medicine of exorcism, nor refuse it because of its length. This, too, is a touchstone of your right disposition for grace.»

The need for such frequent and prolonged exorcisms was due to the belief of ancient Christians that the susceptibility of unbaptised people to sin was due to their exposure to evil spirits.

Typically, exorcism and fasting went together. This practice was meant to be reminiscent of Christ’s hermitage in the desert, where He fasted and resisted the devil’s temptations.

How was exorcism performed?

Across the churches, the rite of exorcism had only two things in common: calling on the name of Christ (prayer) and blowing.

In the West, exorcisms were shorter, and sometimes included nothing else but the two elements above. In the East, exorcism was accompanied by instructive discourses and symbolic acts visualising the pangs of hell and building on select Bible verses and writings of the Holy Fathers. Sometimes, the candidates drank brine (as salt was believed to give strength to the body). To strengthen the spirit of the candidate, multiple prayers were said.

In the West, incantatory prayers were short quotes from the scripture, but in the East, they were much longer. As an illustration, here are some examples of the short prayers that accompanied the rite of exorcism in the Church of Toledo:

The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! (Zachariah 3:2).

Away with you, Satan! (Matthew 4:10).

Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed. (Rev 5:5)

Compare these to the first of the four incantatory prayers of St John Chrysostom:

Prayer One: O Eternal God, Who has redeemed the race of men from the captivity of the devil, deliver Thy servant/handmaid from all the workings of unclean spirits. Command the evil and impure spirits and demons to depart from the soul and body of your servant/handmaid and not to remain nor hide in him/her. Let them be banished from this the creation of Thy hands in Thine own holy name and that of Thine only begotten Son and of Thy life-creating Spirit, so that, after being cleansed from all demonic influence, he/she may live godly, justly and righteously and may be counted worthy to receive the Holy Mysteries of Thine only-begotten Son and our God with Whom Thou art blessed and glorified together with the all-holy and good and life-creating Spirit now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Who could perform an exorcism?

There were two traditions. In the first, the ability to perform exorcisms was viewed as a gift of the Holy Spirit, similar to prophecy or miracles. Therefore, anyone who had this gift of God could manifest it actively in the congregation. The Apostolic Statutes state: «An exorcist is not ordained. For it is a trial of voluntary goodness, and the grace of God through Christ by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For he who has received the gift of healing is declared by revelation from God, the grace which is in him being manifest to all. But if there be the occasion for him, he must be ordained a bishop, or a presbyter, or a deacon».

In the second tradition, exorcists must be formally ordained as such. In the clerical hierarchy, exorcists ranked between the reader and deacon. In the absence of an exorcist, a deacon or priest could perform the rite of driving out the demons. Eventually, this tradition prevailed and was formalised in the rules of the Ecumenical Councils. “No one shall be permitted to exorcise in churches or homes unless he has been ordained as a bishop” (Canon 26 of the Council of Laodicea).

Where are all the exorcists now?

As already stated, the practice of exorcism in the early church was mainly associated with catechetical schools. From the end of the fifth century, it began to decline for several reasons. For example, most baptisms began to be performed on newborn children of Christian parents, not on former Pagans who had consciously received Christ. As the demand for catechetical schools reduced, so did the need for exorcists.

Nevertheless, the practice of exorcism did not go out of existence. It is still performed by every member of the Orthodox Church. Exorcism is now a part of the sacrament of Baptism when the catechumen renounces Satan and enters union with Christ”. In this “Baptismal Exorcism”, the catechumen renounces Satan thrice by spitting and blowing towards the west².

Remarkably, prayers for the demon-possessed can be found among the liturgical texts of later periods, such as the Sinai Euchology, the Trebnik of Peter Mogyla, or the Great Trebnik. That does not mean that exorcisms were common in these times: Trebniks often include rites that are used rarely if at all (such as fraternisation, or taking a bishop on a donkey ride). However, occasional reliable reports about the use of exorcism exist, such as the biography of Patriarch Nikon. Exorcisms were still practised, but only in exceptional cases.

Modern practices and controversies of exorcism

Modern practices of exorcism differ across the local Orthodox Churches. In the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Hellenic Orthodox Church, the Polish Orthodox Church, and the Orthodox Church of America only baptismal exorcisms are performed. Exorcisms are practised with some degree of regularity in the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Georgia and the Orthodox Church of Czechia and Slovakia. In the Serbian Patriarchate, the Sacrament of Holy Unction is used to heal the demon-possessed. In other Churches, exorcisms are very rare.

How are exorcisms performed today?

Two different rites are used. The first is from the Great Trebnik and the second is from the Trebnik of Petr Mohyla. The exorcism of the Great Trebnik is a synthesis of several ancient rites and includes the opening prayers, psalms, readings from the Apostle and Gospel, and the invocatory prayers of St Basil the Great and St John Chrysostom. The exorcism from the Trebnik of Petr Mohyla is a modification of the Catholic rite of exorcism, with components of Greco-Slavic origin. In different Churches, one rite may be more common than the other, but in general, the exorcism from the Great Trebnik is used more often.

In the 20th-century Russian Church, exorcism experienced a renaissance. In the early decades, some exorcists were saints, e.g. St. John of Kronstadt, the Venerable Seraphim (Amelin) and Seraphim (Romantsov) of Glinsky Monastery, among others. In its present form, exorcism – better known by the term “otchitki”, began to spread in the 1990s, in the wake of growing interest in religion among the masses after the demise of the Soviet Union. It was a propitious time not only for traditional religions but also for unconventional religiosity, occultism, destructive sects and cults. In these circumstances, the rise of exorcism was surrounded by controversy, and marred by errors on the part of its recipients and practitioners.

The desirability and usefulness of the practice were called into question, particularly in cases of multiple exorcisms performed on one person. One clergyman shared this comment: “I read in the hagiographies of the saints of old expended enormous effort to heal a single person from possession. Nowadays, people are arriving to receive an exorcism by the busload. I wonder what has happened. Have our priests become greater ascetics than Saint Sergius of Radonezh, or have the demons become more willing to compromise?”

In addition, the following problems were mentioned: performance of the chrismation without the blessing of the bishop; performance of the chrismation for mercenary motives; signs of psychological violence towards people undergoing chrismation, such as videos recorded and published in open sources; false rabies and cries, magic, consumer perception of exorcism; spiritual harm to priests who practised exorcism frequently.

However, these controversies do not necessarily suggest that the practice of exorcism is fundamentally flawed or archaic, and should be discontinued.

In response to these common abuses, the hierarchs of the Russian Church drafted a guideline “On the attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church’s Attitude to the present-day practices of Exorcism”. The document addresses the risk of abusive practices by putting forth several requirements for the practitioners and recipients of exorcism. The practitioners must:

- Receive the blessing of the diocesan bishop before practising;
- Lead an exemplary spiritual life and have sufficient experience to verify a particular person's need for an exorcism.
- Prepare himself by fasting, prayer and contemplation, taking confession and receiving communion.
- Practise without expecting to be paid.
- Follow one of the two established rites without changing them unnecessarily.

An exorcism must not be performed on persons who are not possessed, including but not limited to:

- Patients with a mental disorder;
- Individuals with distorted views about spiritual life
- Individuals who fake demon possession
- Sufferers from passions and addictions

When to perform an exorcism

The decision should be left to an experienced priest with the blessing to perform exorcisms. Several things should be born in mind. Before we proceed to discuss them, consider this remark by Archimandrite Adrian (Kirsanov), as quoted by hieroschemamonk Valentin (Gurevich):

“I cannot name a single example of helping someone in any substantive way. I cast out one demon from a person, but seven other demons take its place (Matthew 12:45). Many people come for the exorcism more than once [...] If the Lord allows demon-possession as a cross, am I truly in a position to relieve people of their crosses, even if I am doing it out of love?

When I give communion to the demon-possessed, I say to them:

“This is your cross. It does not matter how the demon acts: from outside or from within. Remember that some carry this cross to the end, and are saved by this torment.”

In his last days, Father Adrian left us a valuable insight: he has cast out many demons and suffered extensively from their revenge, but many of the people he had healed never went to church or took communion, and made themselves defenceless before another attack from the enemy.

Only when people embrace divine grace, can they protect themselves from the forces of evil.

«When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.» (Matthew 12:43-45).

Of course, if God has allowed someone to suffer in this way, it must be accepted with humility and gratitude. Perhaps the severity of this trial can bring the sufferer to reform himself. As the apostle Paul commanded:

«deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.» (1 Corinthians 5:5).

Before resorting to an exorcism, one should participate in the sacraments of Penance, the Eucharist, and Holy Communion, and abandon one's sinful ways. Only in this way could one completely deliver themselves from the influence of evil powers. Exorcism does not guarantee such deliverance: the outcome depends fully on the goodwill and providence of God.



HOLY ASSUMPTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
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AUGUST 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jul 28 9:10 Hours 9:30am Divine Liturgy followed by coffee hour/fellowship	Jul 29	Jul 30	Jul 31 Fast	1 <i>Procession of the Cross</i> Fast	2 Fast	3 Market Day 4:00pm Great Vespers Fast: wine & oil
4 9:10 Hours 9:30am Divine Liturgy followed by coffee hour/fellowship and Special Parish meeting Fast: wine & oil	5 Baking 6:00pm Vespers Fast	6 TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD 9:30am Divine Liturgy with Blessing of Fruit Fast: fish, wine, & oil	7 Fast	8 Fast	9 <i>Glorification of St. Herman of Alaska</i> Fast: Strict fast	10 4:00pm Great Vespers Fast: wine & oil
11 9:10 Hours 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fast: wine & oil	12 Fast	13 Fast	14 6:00 Vespers Fast	15 DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS 9:30 Divine Liturgy with Procession	16 Fast	17 4:00pm Great Vespers
18 67th Annual Halupki Festival 9:40am Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy	19	20	21 Fast	22	23 Fast	24 4:00pm Great Vespers
25 9:10 Hours 9:30am Divine Liturgy	26	27	28 6:00pm Vespers Fast	29 <i>Beheading of the Baptist</i> 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fast: Strict fast	30 Fast	31 4:00pm Great Vespers

See Sunday Bulletin for changes.