

St. Demetrius Orthodox Church

August 2026

Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

On the 6th of August, our Church celebrates the feast of the glorious Transfiguration of the Lord.

The purpose of this feast is to celebrate that glorious event in the life of Jesus Christ, the Transfiguration, which some of the holy Fathers call the second Theophany. The significance of this event is evident from the fact that three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke - recorded it. The public career of Christ is now nearing its end, soon to be followed by His suffering and death. Although the Apostles believed that Jesus was the Messiah sent by God and although they expressed this faith through the lips of St. Peter, nevertheless, their faith was not as yet confirmed. Hence, Christ wished to strengthen it by an extraordinary revelation. Therefore, several days after predicting His own passion and death, Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him, and went up to the mountain of Tabor; where there is prayer, He revealed to them a ray of His Divinity. St. Matthew, when writing about this miraculous transfiguration of Christ says: And He was transfigured before Him. And His face shone as the sun, and His garments became white as snow. (Mt. 17:2).

Near Christ, the Old Testament prophets, Moses and Elias, appeared and spoke with Him about His death. The Apostle Peter seized by the brightness of Christ's glory cried out: Lord, it is good for us to be here (Mt.17:4) As at the baptism in the Jordan, so too a voice was heard from heaven saying: This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased (Mt.17:5). The Gospel says nothing of the place where the transfiguration took place. However, Christian tradition since the fourth century generally accepts the place as Mt. Tabor.

Why did Jesus Christ show His glory only to the above mentioned disciples? According to the opinion of St. John Damascene, Christ took Peter with Him so that he, who publicly acknowledged Christ's Divinity, might hear the confirmation of his profession also from the Heavenly Father. The Lord took James up to Mt. Tabor because he was to be the first bishop of Jerusalem and the first of the Apostles to give up his life for Christ. Finally, the Savior also made St. John a witness of His transfiguration for he was His beloved disciple and a virgin having understood Christ's divinity on Mt. Tabor. John wrote in his Gospel. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (Jn1:1).

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All three Apostles, witnesses of Christ's glory on Mt. Tabor, would later be witnesses of His agony in the Garden of Olives. So deeply impressed were they by Christ's transfiguration that in later years they wrote about it. In his second letter, St. Peter strengthens his faith in Christ by recalling His glorious transfiguration, saying: "For we were eyewitnesses of His greatness. He received glory and praise from God the Father when that unique declaration came to Him out of the majestic splendor; This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this and said from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. (Peter 1:17-18) And the Evangelist John wrote with enthusiasm in his Gospel: And we saw His glory as it were of the begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. (Jn 1:14)+

Is There a Difference?

Tradition and custom..... Both words are used almost interchangeably by many Orthodox Christians. While each carries significance as we live our faith daily, it is important for us to know how they differ, and which should have greater impact on our lives.

Tradition is something that has been handed down to us since the time of the Apostles and the early Church. It pertains to what we BELIEVE, not necessarily to what we DO. It is intertwined with Sacred Scripture as well as the writings of the Church Fathers. Only through the guidance of the Holy Spirit did Holy Tradition develop in the Church. The early Tradition of the Church was an oral one, for the establishment of the church took place long before the development of a written Tradition. By nature and definition, the Tradition of the Church is "set in stone." It can never change.

Customs, however, fall into a totally different category. They deal primarily with the "niceties" of practicing our faith. Various blessings during the liturgical year.....times of services.....fasting regulations....styles of vestments.....these are all examples of customs in the Church. They may be universal throughout the Orthodox world, they may be based on some national practice or they may simply develop on a parish level. While customs truly enhance our religious experience in many ways, we must never forget that they are a distant second to Holy Tradition in importance and meaning. Simply put, Tradition clearly defines who we are and what we, as Orthodox Christians, must believe. Customs may come and go, but Tradition will remain with us forever!

On This Month in St. Demetrius Church History...

August 1, 2003

Twenty-three years ago Father Dusan Koprivica, his wife Patty, and their three children Jovanka, Milena and Angelo, moved to Jackson. Father Dusan had been serving St. Demetrius Church since 2000, commuting 98 miles from Mt. Clemens!

August 28, 1960

Father John Ball issued St. Demetrius' first parish newsletter to a list of Orthodox Christian families in Jackson. This list included founding members of St. Demetrius and other Orthodox families of Jackson in the hope that they would become part of the St. Demetrius community.

Sources: stdemetrius.com/about

Building a vibrant, open Orthodox community in the Jackson area through worship, fellowship, discipleship, service and outreach.

Therefore, Brethren, Seek Out From Among You Seven Men...

In the sixth chapter of the Book of Acts, we read of a great problem developing in the early Church. To put it simply, the Apostles — the first priests of the Church — were becoming overworked!! In the language of today's Church, we might say that they were on the verge of "clergy burn-out." They rightly perceived that their primary mission was to preach the word of God and carry Christ's Gospel to the ends of the earth. This is precisely what their Master had instructed them to do. The phenomenal growth of the early Church, however, brought increased duties and obligations to the Twelve. The poor...the widows...the orphans...the Church had assumed responsibility for them all, and the task of caring for them fell largely upon the Apostles. If the Apostles were expected to look out for the material needs as well as the spiritual concerns of their ever-increasing flock, then they would need some assistance.

Seven men, therefore, were selected to provide this aid, bringing about the establishment of the diaconate in the Christian Church. The original seven Deacons of the Church were: "Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a convert from Antioch." (Acts 6:5)

Deacons continue to play an important role in the Church. They assist bishops and priests in the celebration of liturgical services, teach Church School and Bible Study classes and visit the sick. Many of the dedicated deacons of today's Church fulfill their tasks while still holding demanding secular jobs. Let us pray that more men will be inspired to seek the life of service for which deacons are called.

2026 Sisterhood Bake Sale

Here are the dates for making baklava, zelnic and soup:

Friday & Saturday, September 11th & 12th making baklava at 9 a.m.

Saturday, October 3rd making spinach zelnic at 9 a.m.

Saturday, October 24th making leek & cheese zelnic at 9 a.m.

Sunday, November 8th after church and Monday, November 9th 9 a.m making soup.

The pre-order deadline is Sunday, October 18th.

Bake Sale is Saturday, November 21st.

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