

IMPORTANT NOTE: St. Andrews Management require us to vacate the church by 3pm every Sunday. There is no negotiation on this.

Fr. John

Church Security

After all Services, and any meetings and refreshments have finished, the church is locked and so is the main gate - please be careful that you are not locked in! **In an emergency telephone 07733227767**

The Parish of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Ecumenical Patriarchate)
Registered Charity Number: 1125574

Parish Clergy

Parish Priest

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Parish Website: www.dormitionparishlondonep.co.uk

Our Parish is under the omophorion of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The Church of St. George in the Phanar (Fener) is the fifth Patriarchal church in Constantinople (Istanbul) and home to the Ecumenical Patriarchate since the fifteenth century (website of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is at: www.patriarchate.org). We are within the Deanery of Great Britain and Ireland (website is at: www.exarchate-uk.org) and part of the Archdiocese of Orthodox Parishes of Russian Tradition in Western Europe under His Eminence Archbishop Gabriel of Comana, Exarch of Western Europe. The Archdiocesan Cathedral is the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, rue Daru, Paris, France (website of the Archdiocese is at: www.exarchat.eu).

The Dormition of the Mother of God (EP)



**Orthodox Parish Worshipping
at St. Andrew Holborn**

**Issue: 76; August, 2010
SERVICES THIS WEEK**

Saturday: August 28th

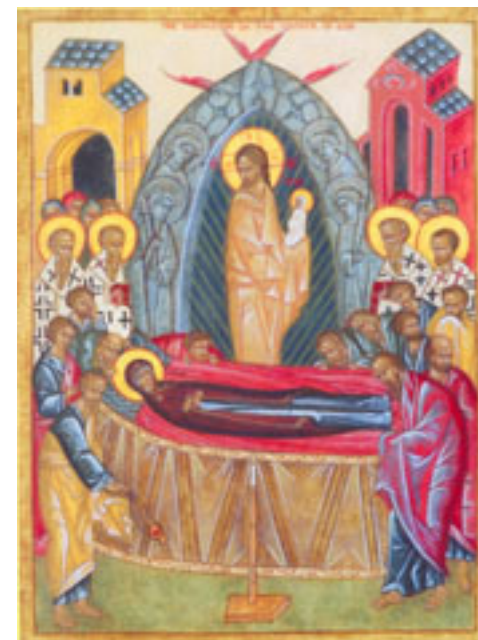
5:30pm: Vigil

Sunday: August 29th

10:30am: The Holy Liturgy

*Feast of the
Dormition of the Mother of God*

All services are celebrated in Church Slavonic and in English.
THIRD ISSUE IN AUGUST



**“In giving birth, O Mother of God, Thou hast kept Thy virginity,
and in falling asleep Thou hast not forsaken the world. Thou, O
Mother of life, hast passed over into life and by Thy prayers dost
deliver our souls from death.”**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

“St. Luke uses the phrase *“in Nazareth, where He was brought up”* and this homely expression opens for us the idea of a family, a father, a mother, brothers, sisters and at the very least a known community. We have another reference to it when one of the disciples asked *“can any good come out of Nazareth?”* And finally when Christ reads in the small synagogue there, we see that He and his family belonged.

Today we are remembering the life and falling asleep of Mary, the Mother of God and we can't really appreciate it without placing her within the little family in Nazareth. And using the word “little” is probably inaccurate because in the usual middle eastern way there would be an extension of relatives very much on the scene.

Mary's life, like the life of her son had its milestones, beginning with the knowledge that her cousin, Elizabeth, was with child and quick to follow Mary's own encounter with the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation. It was a revealing moment of her nature in that her response was both immediate and humble, *“behold the handmaiden of the Lord”*. Would it all have been different if in the Garden of Eden Eve had said the same? Her “no” was overturned by Mary's “yes”.

For religious Jews and therefore for Christ's parents also the requirement was that 31 days after its birth every firstborn male child must be *“given to God”* in keeping with the Temple law. There was no need to journey to Jerusalem for this - it could have been done in Nazareth and even by proxy but Scripture tells us that the parents of Jesus saw fit to travel to the centre of Jewish worship to perform this rite.

Mary's heart and mind must have had much to ponder. Here was a child above all children and yet He was born in a stable; here was a child who was circumcised but was given a name that was *“to be above all names”*. His mother brings him to the Temple to be redeemed as an ordinary Israelite and is met by two holy witnesses, Simeon and Anna. Filled with the Spirit of the Lord, who tell her that at last their old eyes have seen *“the consolation of Israel”*. And Simeon pressed the Child to his heart and said *“now Lord, let Thy servant depart in peace”*. He is recorded as having said much more but it was enough to set the young mother wondering... no doubt through the whole of His childhood years.

She emerges however on several occasions during her son's public ministry, beginning with the wedding feast at Cana and ending standing at the foot of His cross. A number of Christian denominations have, in reaction to Catholicism, placed her firmly in the background, some even stooping to insult her but she was always there and Christ's last thoughts were for her when He said to John the Beloved disciple *“Son, behold thy mother”*.

So today we keep the feast of her falling-asleep, her dormition, her death. In 1950 Pope Pius XII declared that Mary was assumed into heaven, body and soul. The Orthodox cannot accept this: quite rightly, but it will not shatter nor lessen the deep love that we have for her and we say with all our hearts, *“Most Holy Mother of God save us.”*

Amen.

Fr. John

We next meet here, at St. Andrew's on Saturday, September 4th at 5:30pm for the Vigil and on Sunday, September 5th at 10:30am for the Liturgy.

Please remember the upcoming Parish and Deanery elections.

Any questions ask at the candlestick.
