

LIGHT FROM LIGHT

TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Consecration Issue, June 2016

E. Diamantopoulos





HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN

Isaiah of Denver

REVEREND CLERGY, THE PARISH COUNCIL
AND CONSECRATION COMMITTEE

CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO JOIN IN THE

Consecration

OF
TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
SATURDAY, THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER
TWO THOUSAND SIXTEEN

414 ST. STEPHENS SCHOOL ROAD SOUTH
AUSTIN, TEXAS



Consecration Newsletter

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CONSECRATION WEEKEND

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, November 4:

Arrival of the Holy Relics – 5:45pm

Consecration Festal Eve Vespers Service – 6pm.

Saturday, November 5:

Orthros – 8am.

Divine Service of Consecration – 9am.

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy – 10am.

Consecration Luncheon and Youth Activities at the Church

Grand Banquet at the Driskill – 7pm.

Sunday, November 6:

Orthros – 8:30am

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy – 10am

Metropolitan Luncheon at the Church, hosted by Philoptochos

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And what about tomorrow.....

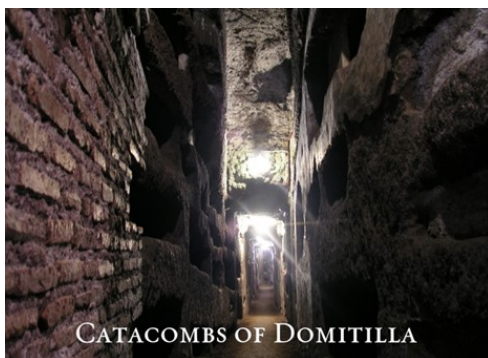
On November 5, 2016 our temple will be consecrated. But what about November 6th and all the days that follow? We are and will be hearing so much about our consecration and yes, it will be a monumental day for our entire parish, a day none of us will ever forget. None the less, as with so many special days in our lives, it will pass. It is important not only to anticipate that day, but also to look to the days beyond the consecration. How will that day of great blessings continue to live in our lives and in the lives of our children and grandchildren?

In the coming months in preparation for the consecration, we will learn much about the service and its theology. We already have learned that it is the temple's Baptism and Chrismation. We shall learn more about the procession, the opening of the church doors, and the placing of the relics of the saints in the Holy Altar. We will understand the meaning of the washing and anointing of the Altar table. We will witness its draping and adorning, as well as the lighting of the holy vigil light. We will begin to comprehend that we will witness the sanctification of the entire building and the hallowing of the very ground upon which our church is built.



The centerpiece of our focus during the consecration service is our Holy Altar. The Altar table represents the tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His tomb is a fountain of life and the source of our resurrection. This is highlighted in a prayer that is said at the conclusion of the Service of Oblation before the beginning of each and every Divine Liturgy:

Your tomb, the fountain of our resurrection, O Christ, is shown forth as life-bearing,
as more splendid than paradise, and more radiant than any royal chamber.

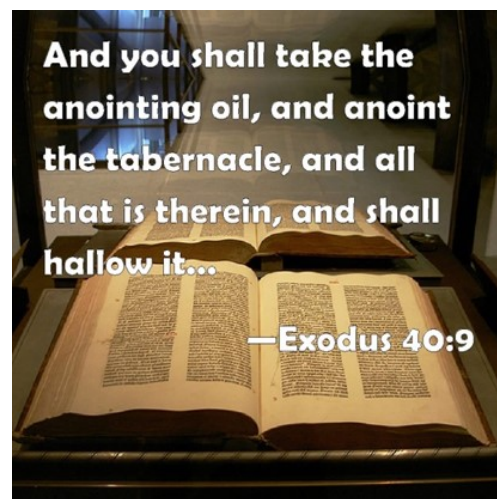


During the early years of our Church's history, the first Christians celebrated the Eucharist while hiding in the catacombs. They offered the Divine Sacrifice on the graves of the martyrs. By placing the relics of saints and martyrs within our Altar table, we reaffirm that the Church is watered by the blood of the holy martyrs and enriched by the lives of the saints. The prayer that the bishop intones prior to the placing of the relics into the Altar frames our understanding of the continuing affect of the presence of the martyrs within our Altar.

...grant to the relics therein of those who have suffered for
Your Holy Name that they may work miracles for our salvation.

Each of us, as Orthodox Christians, have been baptized in Christ in the image of His death and resurrection. After the placing of the relics, the Altar table will also be sanctified by Holy Baptism. The Metropolitan will baptize the Altar with the same Trinitarian baptismal formula commanded by Our Lord: "In the Name

of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and to the ages of ages." Then, just as we were anointed at our Chrismation, the Altar is anointed with Holy Chrism. This represents the gift of the Holy Spirit descending on our Altar as it descended on the Holy Apostles at the first Pentecost. St Symeon of Thessalonica in commenting on the anointing of the Altar during the consecration of an Orthodox church says:



Since the Altar is anointed with the Holy Chrism, which represents the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Altar table then becomes a source of Grace to all people through the Sacraments which are celebrated thereon.

After the anointing of the Holy Table, the Altar will be covered with a white linen cloth, the Katasarkion. This cloth is symbolic of the winding sheet with which St. Joseph of Arimathea and St. Nikodemos wrapped Our Lord's body prior to placing Him in the garden tomb. The Katasarkion will be tied in place with a white cord reminding us how Our Lord allowed himself to be bound as He stood before Pontius Pilate. This white linen wrapping will never be removed as long as our church is standing. The Altar is then draped with its festive coverings and all of its furnishings. The sanctified Altar will stand at the center of our church, and as we were taught by St Symeon, it will be "a source of Grace to all people."

The Grace of God's Holy Spirit will flow from our Holy Altar not only on November 5th, but always. Each Divine Liturgy, each life giving Sacrament, and every blessed service will be filled with the power of God. The Holy Spirit will descend upon us; it will shelter us with its wings. The Holy Trinity will dwell among us, sanctify and consecrate us and the lives of generations of parishioners of Transfiguration. This will be our great blessing not only on the day of the consecration but for all our tomorrows.

Dn. George Bithos



THE RELICS OF THREE HOLY MARTYRS

Lord our God, who are faithful in Your words and truthful in your promises, who gave your holy Martyrs the grace to fight the good fight, to finish the course of true religion and to keep the faith of the true confession, be entreated, all-holy Master, by their intercessions and give to us, your unworthy servants, the grace of a part and inheritance with them, so that, becoming imitators of them, we may be found worthy of the good things laid up for them.

— Hierarchical Prayer from the Service of Consecration

The Relics of the Following

Holy Martyrs

will be sealed into our altar:

St. Panteleimon
the Great Martyr and Healer (July 27)

St. Kyrikos the Martyr (July 15)

The Holy Fathers martyred in the
monastery of Pantokratoros
in Daou Pentelis (+1680)
(Tuesday of Bright Week)



As the Apostles once used the tombs of martyrs for their altars, the relics of Martyrs will be forever sealed into our altar on the day of our Church's Consecration.

ST. PANTELEIMON THE GREAT MARTYR AND HEALER (JULY 27)

The Great Martyr and Healer Panteleimon was born in the city of Nicomedia into the family of the illustrious pagan Eustorgius, and he was named Pantoleon. His mother St Euboula (March 30) was a Christian. She wanted to raise her son in the Christian Faith, but she died when the future martyr was just a young child. His father sent Pantoleon to a pagan school, after which the young man studied medicine at Nicomedia under the renowned physician Euphrosynus. Pantoleon came to the attention of the emperor Maximian (284-305), who wished to appoint him as royal physician when he finished his schooling.

The hieromartyrs Hermolaus, Hermippus and Hermocrates, survivors of the massacre of 20,000 Christians in 303 (December 28), were living secretly in Nicomedia at that time. St Hermolaus saw Pantoleon time and again when he came to the house where they were hiding. Once, the priest invited the youth to the house and spoke about the Christian Faith. After this Pantoleon visited St Hermolaus every day.

One day the saint found a dead child on the street. He had been bitten by a great snake, which was still beside the child's body. Pantoleon began to pray to the Lord Jesus Christ to revive the dead child and to destroy the venomous reptile. He firmly resolved that if his prayer were fulfilled, he would become a follower of Christ and receive Baptism. The child rose up alive, and the snake died before Pantoleon's eyes.

After this miracle, Pantoleon was baptized by St Hermolaus with the name Panteleimon (meaning "all-merciful"). His given name, Pantoleon, meant 'in all things like a lion' but his baptismal name transformed this to merciful in all things.

Speaking with Eustorgius, St Panteleimon prepared him to accept Christianity. When the father saw how his son healed a blind man by invoking Jesus Christ, he then believed in Christ and was baptized by St Hermo-



Source: www.eikonografos.com

laus together with the man whose sight was restored.

After the death of his father, St Panteleimon dedicated his life to the suffering, the sick, the unfortunate and the needy. He treated all those who turned to him without charge, healing them in the name of Jesus Christ. He visited those held captive in prison. These were usually Christians, and he healed them of their wounds. In a short time, reports of the charitable physician spread throughout the city. Forsaking the other doctors, the inhabitants began to turn only to St Panteleimon.

The envious doctors told the emperor that St Panteleimon was healing Christian prisoners. Maximian urged the saint to refute the charge by offering sacrifice to idols. St Panteleimon confessed himself a Christian, and suggested that a sick person, for whom the doctors held out no hope, should be brought before the emperor. Then the doctors could invoke their gods, and Panteleimon would pray to his God to heal the man. A man paralyzed for many years was brought in, and pagan priests who knew the art of medicine invoked their gods without success. Then, before the very eyes

of the emperor, the saint healed the paralytic by calling on the name of Jesus Christ. The ferocious Maximian executed the healed man, and gave St Panteleimon over to fierce torture.

The Lord appeared to the saint and strengthened him before his sufferings. They suspended the Great Martyr Panteleimon from a tree and scraped him with iron hooks, burned him with fire and then stretched him on the rack, threw him into a cauldron of boiling tar, and cast him into the sea with a stone around his neck. Throughout these tortures the martyr remained unhurt, and denounced the emperor.

At this time the priests Hermolaus, Hermippus and Hermocrates were brought before the court of the pagans. All three confessed their faith in the Savior and were beheaded (July 26).

By order of the emperor they brought the Great Martyr Panteleimon to the circus to be devoured by wild beasts. The animals, however, came up to him and licked his feet. The spectators began to shout, "Great is the God of the Christians!" The enraged Maximian ordered the soldiers to stab with the sword anyone who glorified Christ, and to cut off the head of the Great Martyr Panteleimon.

They led the saint to the place of execution and tied him to an olive tree. While the martyr prayed, one of the soldiers struck him with a sword, but the sword became soft like wax and inflicted no wound. The saint completed his prayer, and a Voice was heard from Heaven, calling the passion-bearer by his new name and summoning him to the heavenly Kingdom.

Hearing the Voice, the soldiers fell down on their knees before the holy martyr and begged forgiveness. They refused to continue with the execution, but St Panteleimon told them to fulfill the emperor's command, because otherwise they would have no share with him in the future life. The soldiers tearfully took their leave of the saint with a kiss.

When the saint was beheaded, the olive tree to which the saint was tied became covered with fruit. Many who were present at the execution believed in Christ. The saint's body was thrown into a fire, but remained unharmed, and was buried by Christians. St Panteleimon's servants Laurence, Bassos and Probus witnessed his execution and heard the Voice from Heaven. They recorded the life, the sufferings and death of the saint.

(From the Lives of the Saints available at oca.org)

ST. KYRIKOS (JULY 15)

St. Julitta flourished during the terrible times of the Emperor Diocletian (284-305), that fearful persecutor of Christians. She came from Iconium in Lycaonia, Asia Minor, and was one of the most pious and faithful of Christians. After the death of her husband at a very young age, she dedicated herself to bringing up her infant son, whom she Baptized with the name Kyrikos.

She taught him up to the age of three, with exceeding care and diligence, but particularly by her example of faith in, and love for, our Lord Jesus Christ.

When the victims of the persecution against Christians multiplied, St. Julitta took her little Kyrikos and sought refuge in Seleucia, Cilicia and then in Tarsus, the birthplace of St. Paul.

There, the governor of the city, Alexander by name, a ferocious and bestial man, learned of the Saint and summoned her to defend herself. Seeing the love which she nurtured for her little, Grace-filled Angel, Kyrikos, he attempted to conquer her Faith by threatening her and her child with death. But the Saint remained steadfast and undaunted, and was ready to offer herself as a living and blameless sacrifice, together with her young son, rather than deny the true Faith.

So, the governor angrily snatched little Kyrikos from his mother's arms and began to wheedle, caress, and kiss him, in order to sway his mother and to attract the boy to his side. However, our Lord, Who grants wisdom and enlightenment to infants, bestowed, through the Holy Spirit, "a mouth and wisdom" (St. Luke 21:15) upon Kyrikos, who was small in age but great in confession.

The Divinely-illuminated child began to invoke the Name of Christ with a stammering voice and to cry: "I am a Christian! ...Let me go to my mother!" Indeed, in order to escape from the tyrant, he began to strike him and kick him in the stomach, saying clearly and persistently: "I love Christ!"

Alexander the Governor, unable to endure the blows of young Kyrikos and, in particular, the defeat and the disgrace occasioned by the child's confession, blew up in rage and threw the infant down the steps of the tribunal, kicking him with all his might. The blessed infant received a mortal blow to his head and surrendered his holy and innocent little soul to Christ the Master. In this way, he was counted worthy to receive with glory the crown of confession and suffering.

At this sight, the mother of the Child-Martyr, overcoming nature by her faith in Christ and giving thanks to God,

said to the tyrant: "Even as you crushed the head of my child, so will your false religion be crushed, you harsh and pitiless ruler."

After experiencing fearsome tortures, and yet not denying Jesus, St. Julitta, the mother and Martyr, was beheaded in the year 304, receiving the crown of martyrdom, that she might rejoice with her three- year-old lamb, St. Kyrikos, and be glorified together with him in Heaven by the Angels and on earth by men.

(Abridged, from John Sanidopoulos' Mystagogy blog, at johnsanidopoulos.com)

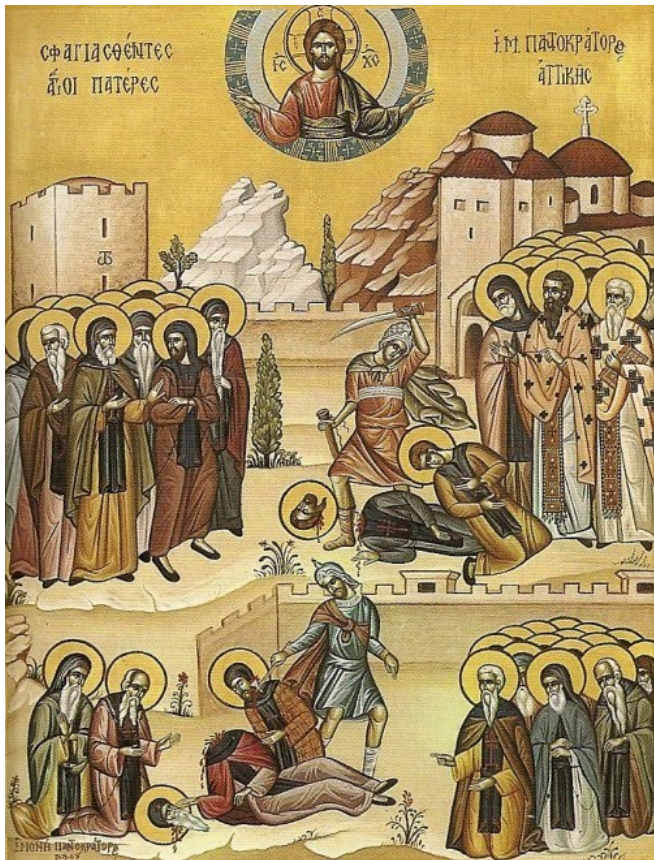


THE 179 HOLY MARTYRS OF DAOU PENTELIS (BRIGHT TUESDAY)

Algerian pirates docked their ship at the port of Rafina during Holy Week of 1680, but failed when they attempted to raid the fortified Daou Pentelis Monastery and to steal its treasures. Under mysterious circumstances, a servant of the monastery decided to betray the fathers and told the pirates about secret entry.

On Pascha, during the midnight service, just after the final "Christ is Risen!" was joyfully chanted by the fathers following the Divine Liturgy, the pirates stormed into the katholikon and began the gruesome slaughter. 179 monks and hieromonks, including the abbot, were massacred by the pirates. They took their treasure and escaped back to Rafina, and set fire to the monastery.

Two escaped martyrdom. A hieromonk and a novice were not at the monastery that tragic evening, as they travelled to serve the Paschal Divine Liturgy at a neighboring outpost of Pantokratoros Monastery. They returned to Daou Pentelis on Pascha Sunday evening only to find two dead monks at the entrance and their monastery burned down, except for the katholikon (which survives till today). When they entered the katholikon, they saw dozens of the fathers in a pool of blood. Some had been severely beaten, while others were cut in pieces.



On Bright Monday morning the hieromonk and the novice set out to seek help in burying the martyred monks from the neighboring fathers of Penteli Monastery, otherwise known as Dormition of the Theotokos Monastery. On the way they had a view of the port of Rafina and saw the pirates leaving. When the fathers of Penteli Monastery heard of the massacre, they went to Pantokratoros Monastery in Daou Pentelis and helped bury all the bodies after a Bright Week funeral service was performed.

The names of the holy martyrs and the location of their burial were lost to history until 1963.

The Pantokratoros Monastery in Daou Pentelis was deserted for centuries, except for one monk to take care of the grounds. In 1963, eleven nuns came to revive it. The nuns tried looking for the burial spot, but could not find them, so the nuns prayed for forty days that a discovery of the relics would be made. In the afternoon of the fortieth day, the relics were found.

The first 65 bodies were discovered by the abess (Styliani)

and nuns inside the katholikon when workers who were working to replace the floor tiles noticed a beautiful fragrance. The abess, understanding this to be a miracle of the martyrs, requested that an excavation be done in front of the Royal Doors, where they discovered an entire body incorrupt. They determined that this must have been the abbot at the time of the slaughter. Excavating the rest of the floor, they discovered the other 64 bodies. To this day the relics of the martyred fathers continue to give off a beautiful fragrance and they flow with myrrh.

114 bodies remained missing. St. Porphyrios told the abess at the time, that the nuns "walk on top of the graves of other saints". With this advice an excavation was done in 1990 around the perimeters of the katholikon, and many more relics were found. Because of the many miracles performed by the grace-exuding Holy Relics, the Ecumenical Patriarchate canonized them in 1992 and established Bright Tuesday as their feast day, the day they were buried by the fathers of Penteli Monastery.

(Abridged, from John Sanidopoulos' Mystagogy blog, at johnsanidopoulos.com, and amended with information from the book, Sacred Monastery Pantocrator Tao, as quoted on the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Denver website.)



The Metropolitan will cense the holy relics of the martyrs, and then raise them with the Paten. The exodus from and procession around the Church is led by the Acolytes, the Choir, the Chanters, the Icon of the Church, the Priests from junior to senior with the senior holding the Holy Gospel, the Metropolitan with the Holy Relics, followed by the entire congregation, leaving the Church empty. The Metropolitan prays (in Grave Tone),

Holy Martyrs, who fought the good fight and received your crowns, intercede with the Lord to have mercy on our souls. Glory to you, Christ God, the boast of Apostles, the joy of Martyrs, whose preaching was the consubstantial Trinity.

from the Service of the Consecration



Understanding the Service of the Consecration

On November 5, 2016, His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah will consecrate Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Austin, Texas. In anticipation of this great event, we offer here a description of the Consecration Service itself and a peek into the significance behind it.

The Night Before: The Vigil before the Consecration

Before the service begins, the altar is cleared. Everything is removed, including the covering, so that the altar stands bare and ready.

The Metropolitan enters the Church, carrying the relics of three Holy Martyrs (St. Panteleimon, St. Kyrikos, and the Fathers Martyred at Daou Pentelis) in a little box called a 'reliquary'. The Reliquary is placed on a Paten, which is the gold diskos or round plate that holds the bread for Holy Communion, and there they will sit on the Altar Table overnight, accompanied by a Vigil Light that burns through the night.



The people will gather for the Festal Vespers Service, which will include a short Prayer Service honoring the memory of the Holy Martyrs.

The Day Itself: The Service of the Consecration

The next morning, we gather in the Church, and the Metropolitan will enter and go to the altar, where the Vigil Light remains lit in front of the relics of the three Holy Martyrs. His Eminence begins the service: "Blessed is our God, always now and forever, and unto the ages of ages."

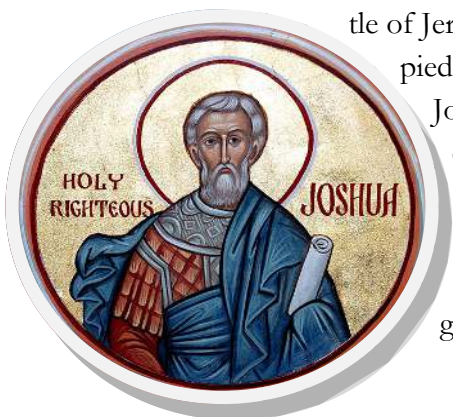
The Metropolitan will say a prayer about the Holy Martyrs, asking them to pray for us and for God to give us grace, so that we might become more like them:

"Lord our God, who are faithful in Your words and truthful in your promises, who gave your holy Martyrs the grace to fight the good fight, to finish the course of true religion and to keep the faith of the true confession, be entreated, all-holy Master, by their intercessions and give to us, your unworthy servants, the grace of a part and inheritance with them, so that, becoming imitators of them, we may be found worthy of the good things laid up for them."

The Metropolitan will cense the relics, and then raise them up.

We will then process out of the Church building: first the acolytes (altar boys), then the Chanters, the Icon of the church, the Priests in order of seniority with the most senior carrying the Holy Gospel, the Metropolitan carrying the Holy Relics upon the Paten, and followed by all of the people.

Following the path of our Church's beautiful new walk-around, we will process with the Metropolitan and the Holy Relics three times around the church. By circling the Church three times, we are delineating a border around the building, and declaring that this Church is set apart for God. This tradition is as ancient as Joshua's Battle of Jericho. God promised the city of Jericho to His people, though it was currently occupied by another people. The chief captain of the host of the Lord, a great angel, came to Joshua and instructed him to create a procession: his people were to process in a specific order, carrying the Ark of the Covenant and circling around and around the city walls, stopping periodically to blow their trumpets. Finally, when the circling was complete, Joshua gave the signal to shout, and "the priests sounded the trumpets, and when the people heard the sounds of the trumpets, all the people shouted together with a great and mighty shout. Then the entire wall fell round about, and all the



people went into the city.” (Joshua 6:19) Though God created this world and placed man in dominion over it, the forces of evil rule over this world. In order to take back this territory, consecrating it to our Lord, we will process as Joshua and His people did, circling its walls to declare the land for God.

On our first walk around the Church, we chant:

“Be renewed, be dedicated, O new Jerusalem; for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For the Father built this house; the Son established this house; the Spirit which enlightens and strengthens and sanctifies our souls.

In the days of old when Solomon dedicated the temple he offered you, Lord, sacrifices of irrational beasts and whole burnt offerings, but when you were well pleased, O Savior, to put an end to forms in order to make known the truth, the whole world began to offer bloodless sacrifices to Your glory; for you are Master of all things and by the Holy Spirit You make all things holy.”

At the end of the first circling, the Metropolitan stops at the front doors of the Church. He places the relics on a table, and we hear an Epistle reading & a reading from the Holy Gospel. This is the Gospel reading the Church gives us at the conclusion of the first circling of the Church:

“At that time, Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do men say that the Son of man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:13-19)



These verses are the foundation of the Church, for the authority given by Christ to the His Holy Apostles (the keys of the kingdom of heaven) will pass down from bishop to bishop in Apostolic Succession; because of Christ’s promise, whatever our priests bind on earth is bound in heaven (such as baptism and marriage and all of the holy sacraments) and whatever they loose on earth is loosed in heaven (such as the sins you confess in Holy Confession). The powers of death cannot prevail against Christ’s Church, for His victory is ours.

The Metropolitan will then pick up the relics (for the Holy Martyrs walk with us!) and we will walk around

the Church a second time. Then the Metropolitan stops at the doors, places the relics on a table, and we hear an Epistle reading & a Gospel reading. This is the second Gospel reading:

“At that time, Jesus entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are



anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 10:38-42;11:27-28)

Jesus reminds us to attend to the one thing needful; we are called to consecrate part of our lives, to step away from the business of life to sit at the feet of our Lord, just as this holy Church is to be set apart from this busy world and become a house of God, a place for worship and prayer and peace.

The Metropolitan picks up the relics (for the Holy Martyrs walk with us!) and we walk around the Church a final time. Then the Metropolitan stops for the last time at the Church doors.

"Make it [this Church] firm until the consummation of the age, unshaken and glorified by You, and count us worthy to worship You, your only-begotten Son and your Holy Spirit, with hymns of praise and glory and with full knowledge and awe, and to be found worthy of your divine mercy, so that our prayers, which we offer to your ineffable compassion on behalf of all your People, may be acceptable to your goodness."

The Metropolitan prays that angels accompany us as we enter:

"Master and Lord our God, You have established in heaven the orders and hosts of angels and archangels to minister to Your glory. Grant that the holy angels may enter with us that together we may serve and glorify Your goodness."

Now the Metropolitan will pound on the doors of the Church, so "that the King of Glory may enter in." This dialogue is taken from Psalm 24, and is sometimes read on Pascha though it is most especially reserved for use in the Consecration Service. His Eminence, raising His Hierarchical staff (Ravdos), knocks on the doors of the Church and says:

"Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter."

From inside the Church and behind the closed doors a voice answers, *"Who is this king of glory?"* The Metropolitan replies, *"The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war. Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter."*

Again, the voice asks, *"Who is this king of glory?"* and the Metropolitan answers, *"The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war. Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter."* A third time the voice asks, *"Who is this king of glory?"* and the Metropolitan replies, *"The Lord of powers, he is the king of glory."* At the third answer the Metropolitan once again lifts the Holy Relics from the table and makes the sign of the Cross with them three times on the closed doors. The doors are unlocked, and everyone processes into the Church.

Everyone enters the Church, and the Metropolitan carries the Holy Relics to the Altar, where they are carefully placed in a hole in the Holy Altar Table. The first Altars in the Early Church were the tombs of the Holy Martyrs, for the early Christians secretly celebrated the liturgy over their bones. It is appropriate that we continue this tradition, and place the bones of martyrs in our altars. These Saints will be our parish's personal patrons and protectors, interceding on our behalf before the Lord.

Together with the Saints' Holy Relics, a Scroll listing the names of all those who pledged as Consecration Godparents and their loved ones will be sealed with them, to reside in this Holy Altar forever. These names will include the



names of our community's founding fathers and mothers, and any names offered in memory of loved ones.

His Eminence will pour Holy Chrism over the Relics & Scroll to symbolize the union between our Lord and His Martyrs. Over the Holy Relics, he will pour a wax/mastic which contains the sweet-smelling spices used by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus to anoint the Body of Christ for His burial. He will then apply a marble lid covering, and seal them permanently. The Holy Altar table thus represents the entombed Body of our Lord.



In Romans 6:8 we read: ***“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him....”*** This reading from the epistle to the Romans is read in the Baptism service, because when we are baptized, we die with Christ so that we may rise with Him. The Holy Relics of Martyred Saints remind us of, and connect us to, this great truth, and to Christ Himself. A Consecration is the “Baptism” of a Church, and in it each of us reaffirms our own Baptism, our own dying and living with Christ. Therefore, on the day of Consecration, the Church allows us to be “entombed” with our Lord through the interment of the names of our loved ones, past and present, living (Church Militant) and dead (Church Triumphant). Thus, together with the reliquary containing the Holy Relics of the three martyred saints, His Eminence will place a scroll with the names of our loved ones, both those who are living and those who have fallen asleep. In this way, we and our loved ones are forever connected to the Saints, and to Christ, Who is “wondrous” among His Saints.

The Metropolitan's robes are now covered with a white sheet, and he prepares to clean the Altar. He is given three bars of soap and a basin of water, which he blesses to make it Holy Water (much like the blessing of waters in Baptism.) As he cleans, he will chant, “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice.” three times — we recognize



these opening words of Psalm 50, the great Psalm of repentance. (The chanters will finish the Psalm as he continues to work.)

After it is clean, he will make the sign of the cross in water over the Altar three times (as when a person is dunked into the water three times in Baptism). He will then make the sign of the cross with oil over the Altar three times, calling out, ***“Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!”*** each time (as when a person is Chrismated.) We will read from Psalm 132, which reminds us that when Aaron was chosen by the Lord and anointed, the oil flowed over him and into his beard!

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life for evermore. (Psalm 132)

Oil was used to heal wounds and to make dry skin supple, to make food delicious and also burned for light — so to have an abundance of oil is to be blessed with many good things, from God's good pleasure (the reason He's anointing you in the first place) to health and plenteous food and to the very light of Christ.)

A cloth with the icons of the four evangelists (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) in each corner is sealed into the Holy Altar with wax. They are in each of the four corners, just as they are in the four corners of our dome, as their Holy Gospels have gone out to all the ends of the universe.

The Holy Altar is now covered with a new white cloth — like the new white garment which is worn by the newly illumined (freshly Baptized & Chrismated person), and then with an outer cloth as well. As the Altar is enrobed, we read Psalm 92:

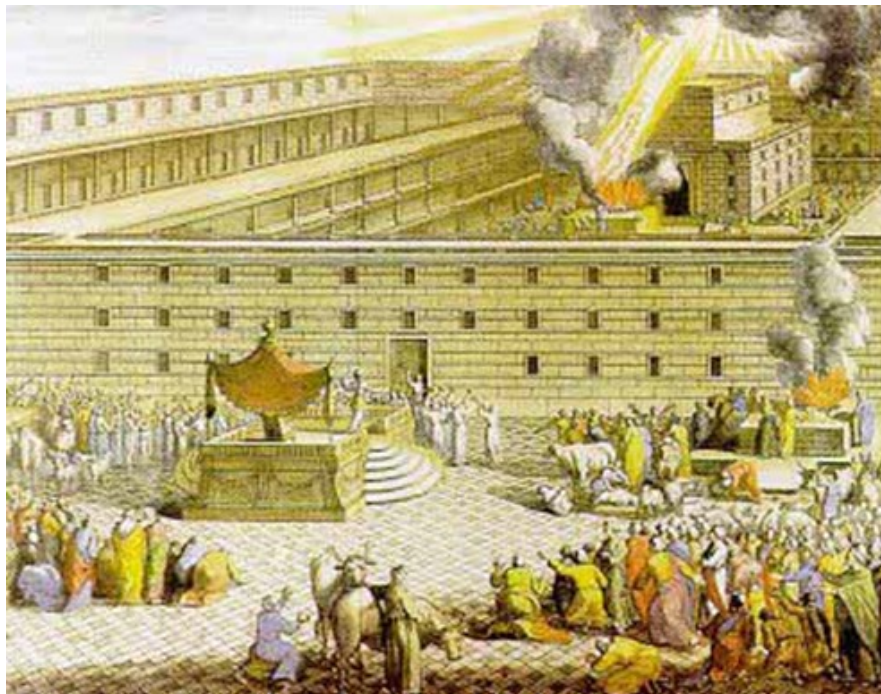
The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed, he is girded with strength. Yea, the world is established; it shall never be moved; thy throne is established from of old; thou art from ever lasting. The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their roaring. Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty! Thy decrees are very sure; holiness befits thy house, O LORD, for ever more. (Psalm 92)

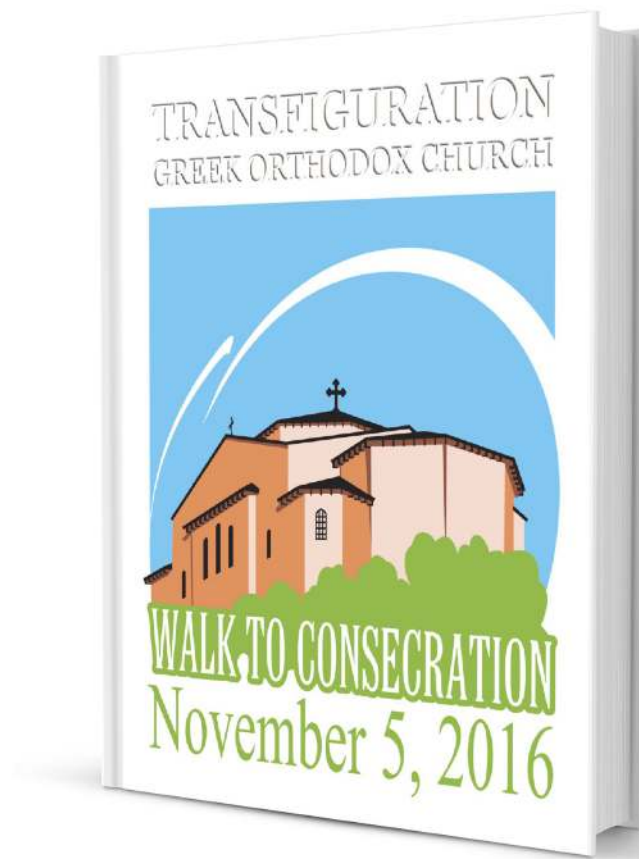
The Metropolitan censes the Holy Altar and the Church. He will now chrismate the icons and the building; carrying a reed to the tip of which has been bound a sponge dipped in holy Chrism, he draws the monogram of Christ in the apse of the Sanctuary, on the four columns and on the lintel of the door of the Church on the inside.

Finally, at the conclusion of the service, His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah will bring to all the faithful the Vigil Light, an oil lamp or kandyli, from the Holy Altar. This light reminds us of the unfailing light of our Transfigured Christ in His Holy Resurrection (and of the candle that a newly Baptised & Chrismated person carries!)

After we have all offered our oil to the holy vigil lamp, we will begin the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

For more information on Transfiguration's upcoming Consecration on November 5, 2016, please visit transfiguration.org and select the 'Consecration' menu.





Consecration

Commemorative Album & DVD Sets

Pre-order yours with early-bird pricing today!

Professionally printed and bound coffee table book.

Documentary DVD will be professionally produced.

This treasured keepsake marks an historic day in the life of our Parish. Become part of this wonderful effort by placing your own advertisement, marking your family's involvement in this one-in-a-lifetime event, and include a line commemorating the eternal memory of loved ones who have fallen asleep in the Lord.

Stop by the Consecration Table

or print an order-form, from next page or on the website.

(Transfiguration.org, under Consecration)

TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

COMMEMORATIVE ALBUM AD CONTRACT AND PURCHASE ORDER FORM



Step 1
Contact Info

Please fill out the contact information below. This information will only be used to contact you regarding your ad or sponsorship. Check the "update" box to allow us to update your contact information in the church records.

☐ Yes, update my info in the church records.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Step 2
Ad Order

Please check the size and type of ad that you want in the Commemorative Album. If you are only using this form to pre-order a Commemorative Album & Video set, please skip to Step 5 below. Please use a separate order form for each individual ad.

Please check only one box.

<input type="checkbox"/> Full Page	(approx. 8" x 10 1/2")	\$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Half Page	(approx. 8" x 5")	\$500	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter Page	(approx. 4" x 5")	\$250	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> In Memorium	(names listed in Memorial section)	\$100	1 line, up to 75 characters

Step 3
Text for Ad

Please provide the exact wording of the ad or memorial you wish to place. For ads only, include any special instructions with a double asterisk (**) in front of the instructions (so they're not part of the ad). For In Memorium, include their relationship to you.

Please PRINT legibly.

Step 4
Ad Graphics

Please specify how you will provide the graphical portion of your ad, if any. All art work must be provided to Ralph or Anita Jones no later than Sunday, November 20, 2016.

☐ I will provide a high resolution print-ready electronic file on a CD, a USB drive, or via email.

☐ I will provide a printed copy of the art work / photo (unframed).

☐ I have an idea, but need assistance.

All art work must be received no later than Sunday, November 20, 2016.

Step 5
Album/DVDs

Please specify how many copies of the Commemorative Album & Video Set you want. The deadline to order them is December 11, 2016.

		# Copies		Total Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Order:	I want to Pre-Order by Nov. 20 & save \$25 off the regular price.	_____	x \$75	= \$_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular Order:	I want to wait until after Nov. 20 & pay the regular price.	_____	x \$100	= \$_____

Step 6
Payment Info

Please select how you will be providing payment for the ad & Album/Video set. Make sure that "Consecration Album" is noted on your payment check or credit card transaction. Make checks payable to TGOC.

Cost of Ad (Step 1) \$_____ + Cost of Album/Video (Step 5) \$_____ = Total Cost \$_____

☐ My payment is enclosed by check (enter check number here _____).

☐ I will provide payment via credit card to the church office or web site.

Mail or Deliver Payments to:

Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church
Attn: Consecration Album/Video
414 St. Stephens School Rd. Austin, TX 78746
Office: 512-329-6363
Transfiguration.org

TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH GRAND BANQUET THE DRISKILL HOTEL SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5, 7:00 PM

Celebrate our Consecration and Vibrant 30 Year History

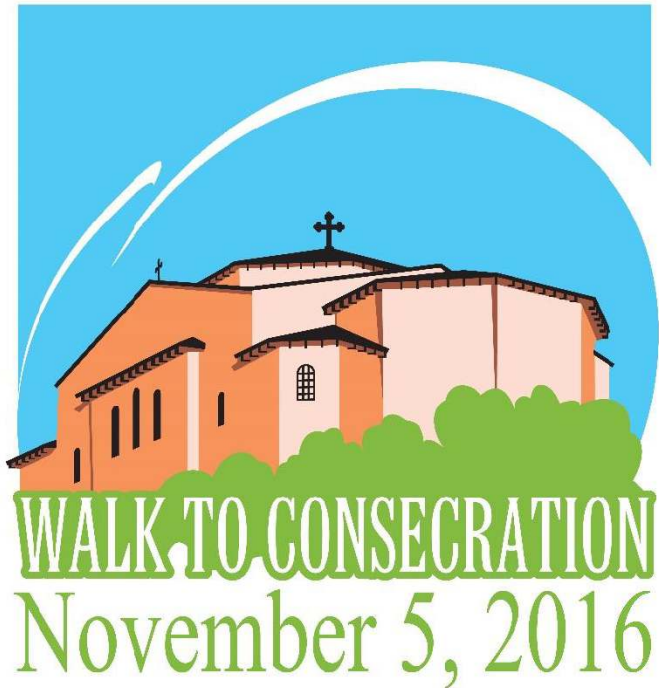
Tickets are \$150 per person and may be purchased either in person at the Consecration table in the Church hall or online through the TGOOC website starting in July.



The Driskill Hotel, built in 1886, is a downtown Austin hotel that is a landmark of Texas hospitality. Special room rates are available.

We would like to express our gratitude and thanks to The Driskill Hotel for working with us and helping us make this new date a reality.

TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



Holy Consecration

**Transfiguration
Greek Orthodox Church**

Austin, Texas

November 4-6, 2016

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

It brings us great joy to be able to announce this Godparent campaign in honor of the Consecration of Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church! Truly, this event will be the greatest celebration of the achievements of this dedicated and faithful community. Over the last thirty years with the tools of faith, hope, and love for our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, this community has expanded from humble neighborhood Church to a shining beacon of Orthodoxy for all of Austin.

With this celebration, however, we realize that our work as Orthodox Christians is never complete. Having come such a long way as a community to this point where we celebrate the completion of our Church, we cannot simply rest, or sit back and enjoy the fruits of our labor. On the one hand, we will be celebrating the work that we have accomplished, the laying of a foundation and building of a church upon it. On the other however, we look to the future work of this community, laying a foundation of love of God in the hearts and minds of our faithful, and building up the body of Christ upon it.

It is with regard to this great calling, to preach Christ Crucified to the ends of the earth that we ask for your generosity with regards to this campaign, and welcome you to become Godparents of the Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church.

Fr. Vasileios

Godparent Sponsorship Form

I (We) pledge to become a Godparent.

- ☐ \$10,000+ _____, amount
- ☐ \$5,000 to \$9,999 _____, amount
- ☐ \$1,000 to \$4,999 _____, amount
- ☐ \$ _____, amount

Completion of pledge payment(s) by
November 30, 2016 is appreciated.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____

ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:
Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church
(Add Consecration Godparent to memo)
414 Saint Stephens School Rd South,
Austin, TX 78746.

To pay by credit card,

CC #: _____

exp. Date: _____

Or contact the office at (512) 329-6363.
The members of the Consecration
Fundraising Committee, the Parish Council
are available to answer any questions you may
have about the intended uses of the funds.

The Sacred Role of the Godparent

In the Holy Sacrament of Baptism, it is our Godparent who affirms our acceptance of Christ, pledges our adherence to the teachings of the Church, and helps guide us on our journey toward salvation. The sacred role of the Godparent is to be our sponsor and guardian in the faith.

Similarly, in the sacred Service of Consecration, we are invited to become the Godparents and guardians of our church! We are called to reaffirm our commitment to Christ, pledge our heartfelt support and be sanctified as those who “love the beauty of His house.” All together we will ask God to “preserve the fullness of His Church.”

For the parishioners of Transfiguration this fullness of the Church is manifested through the expansion of a vibrant spiritual life, ministries responsive to the needs of the faithful and programs that enrich the mind, body, and soul.

We invite you to participate in the special ceremony by becoming a Godparent of Transfiguration’s Consecration.

The funds donated for consecration are dedicated to the expenses of the Holy Consecration as well as improving the education facilities of our parish, as directed by the general assembly.

While remembering our past let us look towards the future with faith and love.

***We humbly ask you to become a
Godparent of our Church!***

Light From Light 22



His Eminence Metropolitan ISAIAH

**Join Us in Consecrating the Church of
Transfiguration unto God**



TRANSFIGURATION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

414 ST. STEPHENS SCHOOL ROAD
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746

LIGHT FROM LIGHT
TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
CONSECRATION 2016 NEWSLETTER

SCHEDULE OF SUNDAY SERVICES

ORTHROS - 8:45AM; LITURGY - 10:00 AM

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION - CALL TO SCHEDULE

GREAT VESPERS SERVICES ARE HELD ON SATURDAY EVENINGS AT 5PM; UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTIFIED

MEMORIAL SERVICES & 40 DAY BLESSINGS

Please call the church office to schedule all memorial services and 40 day baby blessings.

The memorial services are normally read at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

The 40 day blessings are offered either after Orthros and before the Liturgy or at the end of the Divine Liturgy.