WEEKLY BULLETIN

August 10, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 24
9th Sunday After Pentecost

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301
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His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Attached

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2023 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Daniel Slife
Members: Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush
Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School: Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli, Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Sandy Graham V. President: Kathy Gray
Secretary: Katherine Hodge; Treasurer: Mary Magensky;
Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers - 2025

Sunday, August 10 –Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
Epistle: Anastasia Bohush
Sunday, August 17 - Reader Nicholas Morelli
Sunday, August 24 – Sue Ellen Turscak
Sunday, August 31 - Bud Graham

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE DORMITION FAST

August 1- 14

9th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 8
Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord.
Saturday, August 9

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 20:19-31

Sunday, August 10

9:10 am - 3rd and 6th Hours: Subd. Terrence Bilas
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Anastasia Bohush

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17
Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

THE DORMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY
Thursday, August 14

6:00 pm Vigil – Matins and Lamentations
Blessing of Flowers and Herbs

Friday, August 15

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 1
Afterfeast of the Dormition of the Theotokos
Saturday, August 16

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 21:1-14

Sunday, August 17

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Nicholas Morelli
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Nicholas Morelli
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16
Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's
field; *you are* God's building.

10 According to the grace of God, which was given to
me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation,
and other builds on it. But let each one take heed of
how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can
anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus
Christ.

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold,
silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's
work will become clear; for the Day will declare it,
because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test
each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work
which he has built on endures, he will receive a
reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer
loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through
fire.

16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God
and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If
anyone [a]defiles the temple of God, God will destroy
him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you
are.

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-3

22 Immediately Jesus [a]made His disciples get into the
boat and go before Him to the other side, while He
sent the multitudes away. **23** And when He had sent the
multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by
Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was
alone there. **24** But the boat was now [b]in the middle of
the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was
contrary.
25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to
them, walking on the sea. **26** And when the disciples
saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled,
saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.
27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, [c]"Be
of good cheer! [d]It is I; do not be afraid."
28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is
You, command me to come to You on the water."
29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come
down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to
Jesus. **30** But when he saw [e]that the
wind *was* boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to
sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"
31 And immediately Jesus stretched out *His* hand and
caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why
did you doubt?" **32** And when they got into the boat, the
wind ceased.
33 Then those who were in the boat [f]came and
worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of
God."
34 When they had crossed over, they came [g]to the land
of Gennesaret.

August 15th

FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

After the Ascension of the Lord, the Mother of God remained in the care of the Apostle John the Theologian, and during his journeys She lived at the home of his parents, near the Mount of Olives. She was a source of consolation and edification both for the Apostles and for all the believers. Conversing with them, She told them about miraculous events: the Annunciation, the seedless and undefiled Conception of Christ born of Her, about His early childhood, and about His earthly life. Like the Apostles, She helped plant and strengthen the Christian Church by Her presence, Her discourse and Her prayers.

The reverence of the Apostles for the Most Holy Virgin was extraordinary. After the receiving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles remained at Jerusalem for about ten years attending to the salvation of the Jews and wanting moreover to see the Mother of God and hear Her holy discourse. Many of the newly enlightened in the Faith even came from faraway lands to Jerusalem, to see and to hear the All-Pure Mother of God.

During the persecution initiated by King Herod against the young Church of Christ (Acts 12:1-3), the Most Holy Virgin and the Apostle John the Theologian withdrew to Ephesus in the year 43. The preaching of the Gospel there had fallen by lot to the Apostle John the Theologian. The Mother of God was on Cyprus with Saint Lazarus the Four-Days-Dead, where he was bishop. She was also on Holy Mount Athos. Saint Stephen of the Holy Mountain says that the Mother of God prophetically spoke of it: ***"Let this place be my lot, given to me by my Son and my God. I will be the Patroness of this place and intercede with God for it."***

The respect of ancient Christians for the Mother of God was so great that they preserved what they could about Her life, what they could take note of concerning Her sayings and deeds, and they even passed down to us a description of Her outward appearance

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According to Tradition, based on the words of the Hieromartyrs Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3) and Ignatius the God-Bearer (December 20), Saint Ambrose of Milan (December 7) had occasion to write in his work ***"On Virgins"*** concerning the Mother of God: ***"She was a Virgin not only in body, but also in soul, humble of heart, circumspect in word, wise in mind, not overly***

given to speaking, a lover of reading and of work, and prudent in speech. Her rule of life was to offend no one, to intend good for everyone, to respect the aged, not envy others, avoid bragging, be healthy of mind, and to love virtue.

According to Tradition, that from the compiler of Church history Nikēphóros Callistus (fourteenth century), the Mother of God "was of average stature, or as others suggest, slightly more than average; Her hair golden in appearance; Her eyes bright with pupils like shiny olives; Her eyebrows strong in character and moderately dark, Her nose pronounced and Her mouth vibrant bespeaking sweet speech; Her face was neither round nor angular, but somewhat oblong; the palm of Her hands and fingers were longish..."

The circumstances of the Dormition of the Mother of God were known in the Orthodox Church from apostolic times. Already in the first century, the Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite wrote about Her "Falling-Asleep." In the second century, the account of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven is found in the works of Meliton, Bishop of Sardis. In the fourth century, Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus refers to the tradition about the "Falling Asleep" of the Mother of God. In the fifth century, Saint Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, told the holy Byzantine Empress

Pulcheria: ***"Although there is no account of the circumstances of Her death in Holy Scripture, we know about them from the most ancient and credible Tradition."*** This tradition was gathered and expounded in the Church History of Nikēphóros Callistus during the fourteenth century.

At the time of Her blessed Falling Asleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was again at Jerusalem. Her fame as the Mother of God had already spread throughout the land and had aroused many of the envious and the spiteful against Her. They wanted to make attempts on Her life; but God preserved Her from enemies.

Day and night She spent her time in prayer. The Most Holy Theotokos went often to the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and here She offered up fervent prayer. More than once, enemies of the Savior sought to hinder Her from visiting her holy place, and they asked the High Priest for a guard to watch over the Grave of the Lord. The Holy Virgin continued to pray right in front of them, yet unseen by anyone.

In one such visit to Golgotha, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Her and announced Her approaching departure from this life to eternal life. In pledge of this, the Archangel gave Her a palm

branch. With these heavenly tidings the Mother of God returned to Bethlehem with the three girls attending Her (Sepphora, Abigail, and Jael). She summoned Righteous Joseph of Arimathea and other disciples of the Lord and told them of Her impending Repose.

The Most Holy Virgin prayed also that the Lord would have the Apostle John come to Her. The Holy Spirit transported him from Ephesus, setting him in that very place where the Mother of God lay. After the prayer, the Most Holy Virgin offered incense, and John heard a voice from Heaven, closing Her prayer with the word "Amen." The Mother of God took it that the voice meant the speedy arrival of the Apostles and the Disciples and the holy Bodiless Powers.

The faithful, whose number by then was impossible to count, gathered, says Saint John of Damascus, like clouds and eagles, to listen to the Mother of God. Seeing one another, the Disciples rejoiced, but in their confusion, they asked each other why the Lord had gathered them together in one place. Saint John the Theologian, greeting them with tears of joy, said that the time of the Virgin's repose was at hand.

Going in to the Mother of God, they beheld Her lying upon the bed and filled with spiritual joy.

The Disciples greeted Her, and then they told her how they had been carried miraculously from their places of preaching. The Most Holy Virgin Mary glorified God, because He had heard Her prayer and fulfilled Her heart's desire, and She began speaking about Her imminent end.

During this conversation the Apostle Paul also appeared in a miraculous manner together with his disciples Dionysius the Areopagite, Saint Hierotheus, Saint Timothy and others of the Seventy Apostles. The Holy Spirit had gathered them all together so that they might be granted the blessing of the All-Pure Virgin Mary, and more fittingly to see to the burial of the Mother of the Lord. She called each of them to Herself by name, She blessed them and extolled them for their faith and the hardships they endured in preaching the Gospel of Christ. To each She wished eternal bliss and prayed with them for the peace and welfare of the whole world.

Then came the third hour (9 A.M.), when the Dormition of the Mother of God was to occur. A few candles were burning. The holy Disciples surrounded her beautifully adorned bed, offering praise to God. She prayed in anticipation of Her demise and of the arrival of Her longed-for Son and Lord. Suddenly, the inexpressible Light of Divine Glory shone forth, before which the blazing

candles paled in comparison. All who saw it took fright. Descending from Heaven was Christ, the King of Glory, surrounded by hosts of Angels and Archangels and other Heavenly Powers, together with the souls of the Forefathers and the Prophets, who had prophesied in ages past concerning the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

Seeing Her Son, the Mother of God exclaimed: ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God My Savior, for He hath regarded the low estate of His Handmaiden"*** (Luke 1:46-48) and, rising from Her bed to meet the Lord, She bowed down to Him, and the Lord bid Her enter into Life Eternal. Without any bodily suffering, as though in a happy sleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary gave Her soul into the hands of Her Son and God.

Then began a joyous angelic song. Accompanying the pure soul of the God-betrothed and with reverent awe for the Queen of Heaven, the angels exclaimed: ***"Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee, blessed art Thou among women! For lo, the Queen, God's Maiden comes, lift the gates, and with the Ever-Existing One, take up the Mother of Light; for through Her salvation has come to all the human race. It is impossible to gaze upon Her, and it is impossible to render Her due honor"*** (Stikherion on "Lord, I Have Cried").

The Heavenly gates were raised and meeting the soul of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Cherubim and the Seraphim glorified Her with joy. The face of the Mother of God was radiant with the glory of Divine virginity, and from Her body there came a sweet fragrance.

Miraculous was the life of the All-Pure Virgin, and wondrous was Her Repose, as Holy Church sings: ***"In Thee, O Queen, the God of all hath given thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. Just as in the Birth-Giving He did preserve Thine virginity, so also in the grave He did preserve Thy body from decay"*** (Canon 1, Ode 6, Troparion 1).

Kissing the all-pure body with reverence and in awe, the Disciples in turn were blessed by it and filled with grace and spiritual joy. Through the great glorification of the Most Holy Theotokos, the almighty power of God healed the sick, who with faith and love touched the holy bed.

Bewailing their separation from the Mother of God, the Apostles prepared to bury Her all-pure body. The holy Apostles Peter, Paul, James and others of the Twelve Apostles carried the funeral bier upon their shoulders, and upon it lay the body of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Saint John the Theologian went at the head with the resplendent palm-branch from Paradise. The other saints and a

multitude of the faithful accompanied the funeral bier with candles and censors, singing sacred songs. This solemn procession went from Sion through Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane.

With the start of the procession there suddenly appeared over the all-pure body of the Mother of God and all those accompanying Her a resplendent circular cloud, like a crown. There was heard the singing of the Heavenly Powers, glorifying the Mother of God, which echoed that of the worldly voices. This circle of Heavenly singers and radiance accompanied the procession to the very place of burial.

Unbelieving inhabitants of Jerusalem, taken aback by the extraordinarily grand funeral procession and vexed at the honor accorded the Mother of Jesus, complained of this to the High Priest and scribes. Burning with envy and vengefulness toward everything that reminded them of Christ, they sent out their own servants to disrupt the procession and to set the body of the Mother of God afire.

An angry crowd and soldiers set off against the Christians, but the circular cloud accompanying the procession descended and surrounded them like a wall. The pursuers heard the footsteps and the singing but could not see any of those

accompanying the procession. Indeed, many of them were struck blind.

The Jewish priest Athonios, out of spite and hatred for the Mother of Jesus of Nazareth, wanted to topple the funeral bier on which lay the body of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, but an angel of God invisibly cut off his hands, which had touched the bier. Seeing such a wonder, Athonios repented and with faith confessed the majesty of the Mother of God. He received healing and joined the crowd accompanying the body of the Mother of God, and he became a zealous follower of Christ.

When the procession reached the Garden of Gethsemane, then amidst the weeping and the wailing began the last kiss to the all-pure body. Only towards evening were the Apostles able to place it in the tomb and seal the entrance to the cave with a large stone.

For three days they did not depart from the place of burial, praying and chanting Psalms. Through the wise providence of God, the Apostle Thomas was not to be present at the burial of the Mother of God. Arriving late on the third day at Gethsemane, he lay down at the tomb and with bitter tears asked that he might be permitted to look once more upon the Mother of God and bid her farewell. The Apostles out of heartfelt pity for him

decided to open the grave and permit him the comfort of venerating the holy relics of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Having opened the grave, they found in it only the grave wrappings and were thus convinced of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven.

On the evening of the same day, when the Apostles had gathered at a house to strengthen themselves with food, the Mother of God appeared to them and said: ***"Rejoice! I am with you all the days of your lives."*** This so gladdened the Apostles and everyone with them, that they took a portion of the bread, set aside at the meal in memory of the Savior ("the Lord's Portion"), and they exclaimed: ***"Most Holy Theotokos, save us".*** (This marks the beginning of the rite of offering up the "Panagia" ("All-Holy"), a portion of bread in honor of the Mother of God, which is done at monasteries to the present day).

The sash of the Mother of God, and Her holy garb, preserved with reverence and distributed over the face of the earth in pieces, have worked miracles both in the past and at present. Her numerous icons everywhere pour forth signs and healings, and Her holy body, taken up to Heaven, bears witness to our own future life there. Her body was not left to the vicissitudes of the transitory world

but was incomparably exalted by its glorious ascent to Heaven.

The Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos is celebrated with special solemnity at Gethsemane, the place of Her burial. Nowhere else is there such sorrow of heart at the separation from the Mother of God, and nowhere else such joy, because of Her intercession for the world.

BLESSNG OF FLOWERS AND HERBS

On the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, flowers and herbs are blessed. Please bring your flowers and herbs to the **Vigil and Lamentations on Thursday, August 14 (6:00 pm)** and place them on the table under the Icon of St. Herman for blessing.

The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Friday morning, August 15, at 9:30 am.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, August 12, 2025 – 6:30 pm

OUR STEWARDSHIP – AUGUST 3, 2025

Candles:	**$ 79.00**
Sunday Tray Offerings:	**905.00**
Improvement Fund:	**5.00**
Tithely Donations:	**1,415.12**
TOTAL:	**$2,404.12**

THE LAMENTATIONS OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS
(From the First Stasis)

1. In a grave they laid you yet, O Christ, you are life and they now have laid the Mother of Life as well: both to angels and to men a sight most strange!

2. We exalt you greatly, Theotokos most pure, and we glorify your holy Dormition now, as we bow before your honored precious tomb.

3. In your womb you held him who cannot be contained; you are life to all the faithful: how can you die, and your body be contained within a tomb?

4. You brought forth, Pure Maiden, God the heavenly King, and today in manner royal are carried forth to the Kingdom of the Heavens as a Queen.

5. Holy Theotokos, You have passed from this world, in departing not forsaking those left on earth, but delivering this world from every ill.

6. All the earth sings glory at your grave side, O Christ, with all reverence, O Master, we also praise the entombment of your Mother, ever Pure.

7. Overcome with wonder, are the angels in awe in beholding you, Pure Maiden, laid out as dead, for from you has Light beamed forth to all the world.

8. Maiden Pure and Spotless, and our Heavenly Queen, once again has God sent Gabriel down to earth with the joyful news that you have left this life.

9. Now the Bridegroom calls you, to rejoice, Bride of God, in a manner both divine and most beautiful in the Bridal Chamber, holy and divine.

10. You, O Virgin, come now to the throne seat of God where the awesome unapproachable Light shines forth from the Trinity, and lights where you repose.

11. From the earth departing, You appeared before God. You were not, O Theotokos, removed from God, nor has God been parted from His mother's heart.

12. Your most honored Body, Theotokos, remained uncorrupted by decay as you lay entombed, but it passed with you to heaven from the earth.

13. Your all-holy face shines Purest Maiden, in death, and your countenance appears now as Paradise, breathing forth to all believers grace and life.

14. We your children offer lamentations and love unto you who are our Mother: accept our gift which we offer from the deepness of our souls.

Glory to the Father and the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Now unto the Father and the Holy Spirit we with gladness sound forth hymns, Word and God of all, and we glorify your countenance divine.

Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.
Every generation comes to know you as blest, and your holy pure Dormition we glorify Theotokos, ever-Virgin, Sovereign Queen!
(*Repeat Verse One)*
In a grave they laid you yet, O Christ, you are life and they now have laid the Mother of Life as well: both to angels and to men a sight most strange!

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila Cravcenco
Kristopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTINS

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Andrew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Priest John Manuel
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodovna