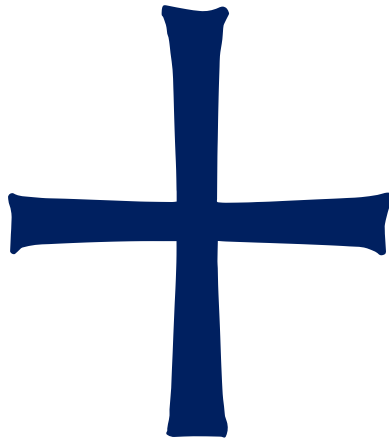


SAINT ELIZABETH ORTHODOX CHURCH



Sunday Bulletin

September 10, 2023—Afterfeast of the
Nativity of the Theotokos



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Welcome to St. Elizabeth

WELCOME VISITORS! We are delighted you are here. It is our sincere desire that your participation today in the Divine Liturgy will draw you closer to Christ and His Church. Please join us after the service for coffee and refreshments in our fellowship hall. If you have questions about any facet of Orthodox worship, our priest—Father John Strickland—would be very happy to meet and assist you in any way possible.

If you are not familiar with the Orthodox Church, you may see some things that are new to you—icons and incense, the sign of the cross, veneration of the saints, and a lot of standing. These elements have been part of traditional Christian worship from ancient times. They reflect the heavenly nature of the Church.

If you would like to learn more about Orthodoxy, we have a small bookstore where Orthodox publications may be purchased and a lending library where many Orthodox books and periodicals can be borrowed. If you would like to learn more about our parish, please visit our website at <https://stelizabethorthodox.org>. There, you can find a link to our parish YouTube page where you can view Father John's Sunday homilies.

Please note that Orthodox priests may serve Communion only to baptized and chrismated members of the Orthodox Church. The Eucharist is the paramount expression of unity among Christians; but the reality today is that many Christians are not united in matters of doctrine and practice. While some Christians are content to agree to disagree, we believe true unity will occur only when modern Christians are reconciled to the ancient Church, with its faith and life delivered “once, and for all.” In light of this, we respectfully request that rather than partaking of the Eucharistic Chalice, our non-Orthodox guests join us in receiving the *antidoron*—or blessed bread—served at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Please feel free to contact Fr. John any time at (360) 598-9700 or rector@stelizabethorthodox.org.

—Thank you for joining us today. Glory to Jesus Christ!

Bulletin News

- ❖ Church School—Our parish will begin a new year of St. Elizabeth's Church School in October, and we are looking for teachers and substitutes to support the upcoming school year. We need six volunteers to be teachers, and at least three for substitutes.

To parents of children ages 5 to 18—St. Elizabeth's Church School is pleased to partner with you in the faith education of your children. You can now register your children for the upcoming school year at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/29n7zpar>.

Please contact Roxanne with any questions at rox@tara-lu.com. You can also email her for an individual invite to the registration form above. Please pray for our Church School whether you have children or don't, whether you might volunteer or not!

- ❖ Meal Teams—If you enjoy our Sunday meals and have not joined a meal team, please join one! We need your help. Contact Joy at whitetigerofjoy@gmail.com to join a team.

September Birthdays, Name Days & Anniversaries

- ❖ Name days—St. Gordian (Sept. 13th)
- ❖ Birthdays—Gordy Becker (Sept. 13th)
- ❖ Anniversaries—Bryan & Jamie Telegin (Sept. 9th)

This Week at St. Elizabeth

Sept. 11 th —Monday 6:30pm Visit by Bishop Alexei of Sitka & Alaska	Sept. 4 th —Thursday—Elevation of the Cross 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Sept. 13 th —Wednesday 6:00pm Festal Vigil	Sept. 16 th —Saturday 9:00am Men's Fellowship 4:00pm Parish Council 5:30pm Panikhida for Mark Thoman 6:00pm Great Vespers

Today's Hymns

14th Sunday After Pentecost—Tone 4. Afterfeast of
the Nativity of the Theotokos. Sunday before
Elevation.

Tone 5 **Troparion** *(Resurrection)*

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 **Troparion** *(Feast)*

Thy nativity, O Virgin,
has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!
The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God,
has shone from thee, O Theotokos.
By annulling the curse,
He bestowed a blessing//
By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Tone 5 **Troparion** *(Church)*

O God-wise Elizabeth,
with humility thou didst hide thy nobility and honor Christ
especially by imitating the labors of Martha and Mary.
As a sacrifice to God, thou didst arm thyself with works of mercy,
patience, and love.
Seeing thy life of good works and suffering, we sincerely beseech
thee, our true teacher.
O Venerable Martyr, Grand Duchess Elizabeth, //
entreat Christ our God to enlighten and save our souls.

Tone 1 Troparion (*Martyrs*)

Let all who rejoice at their triumph honor those three virgin martyrs,
who are united to God as ^ sisters
and who pour forth fair streams of grace:
Menodora, Metrodora, and Nymphodora,
who were in all things ^ courageous; //
they ever pray to the Trinity for us.

Tone 5 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, //
and we cry to Thee: "O Lord, save us!"

Tone 2 Kontakion (*Church*)

Who can tell of thy great acts of faith,
O long suffering Grand Duchess Elizabeth,
while enduring death in the depths of the earth,
thou didst radiate the brightness of Paradise.
Rejoicing in psalms and hymns, thou didst pray with the angels for
thy torturers,
"O Lord forgive them for they know not what they do." //
O Christ our God, through her prayers, have mercy, and save
our souls.

Glory . . .

. . . over

Tone 4 Kontakion (*Martyrs*)

Invincible in your struggles for the Holy Trinity,
and through your love for each other as sisters,
you defeated the foe of the spiritual life,
and with the five virgins, entered victoriously into the heavenly mansions
//

where you ever rejoice with the angels in the presence of the
King of all!

Now and Ever . . .

Tone 4 Kontakion (*Feast*)

By thy nativity, O most pure Virgin,
Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness,
Adam and Eve — from the corruption of death.
And we, thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing
to thee://

“The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the
nourisher of our Life.”

Instead of “It is truly meet...”: Magnify, O my soul, the most
glorious birth of the Mother of God! Virginité is foreign to
mothers; childbearing is strange for virgins. But in thee, O
Theotokos, both were accomplished.// Therefore all we
nations of the earth unceasingly magnify thee.

Today's Scripture Readings

Epistle Reading—2 Corinthians 1:21–2:4

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

Gospel Reading—Matthew 22:1–14

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, Behold, I have made ready my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.' But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment; and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Today's Commemorations

The Holy Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora

They were sisters by birth and grew up somewhere in Asian Bithynia. Reared in the spirit of Christianity, they withdrew from the city to the wilderness, wishing to elevate their minds to God and to free themselves of everything in this deceitful world, and to live this life in purity and virginity as true brides of Christ. They dedicated themselves to great labor, fasting and prayer, until God adorned them with the gift of miracle-working. When people began to bring the sick to them for healing, they became well known against their will. A certain governor, Fronton, heard of them and brought them to trial. Upon seeing them, the governor was amazed at the beauty of their faces. For, even though they were great fasters and their bodies were withered, their faces were radiant, illumined by inward peace and the grace of God. At first, the governor flattered them and promised to send them to the emperor, who would give them in marriage to his noblemen. But when he was convinced that all of his flattery and promises had no effect on these brides of Christ, he ordered that Menodora be tortured first, and her sisters thrown into prison. After cruel tortures, the governor cried out to Menodora, who was wounded and bloody: "Offer sacrifice to the gods!" To this the holy martyr replied: "Do you not see that I am offering my entire self as a sacrifice to my God?" When St. Menodora was slain by the tortures, the governor then brought out the remaining two sisters, and stood them by the dead body of Menodora. Pointing to the body of their sister, he counseled them to deny Christ. Since they remained steadfast, he slew them by harsh tortures. Just then, a thunderbolt struck from heaven, and killed the soulless Fronton and his servants. Christians honorably buried the bodies of these holy martyrs of God. They suffered between the years of 305 and 311, during the reign of Maximian Galerius, and found rest in the Kingdom of Christ.

Reflection

Examples of courage and patience displayed by martyred Christian women—thousands upon thousands of them—have shone with radiant glory on all the pages of the history of the Christian Church. However, as amazing as these examples of voluntary martyrs are, the examples of ascetics, known and unknown, are not a bit less amazing, for asceticism is nothing less than prolonged martyrdom. Paul, the Bishop of Monemvasia, has given to posterity an instructive example of women ascetics. While he was still a layman and a collector of the royal tax, it happened that he stayed in a certain monastery. Seeing ravens landing on the fruit trees, breaking off branches with fruit and carrying them away, Paul wondered at this, and followed them with the monks to see where they were taking the fruit. Going thus, they came upon an impassable forest. The ravens landed at the bottom, deposited the broken fruit branches, and quickly returned. Paul and the monks investigated, and discovered a cave in which three women ascetics were living. The oldest one related their life story to them: She was of noble birth, from Constantinople. When her husband died, another nobleman wanted to take her as his wife by force. However, she decided that after the death of her first husband she would spend the remainder of her life in chastity. Therefore she distributed her wealth to the poor and fled to this deserted place with two of her maidservants. They lived there for eleven years in fasting and prayer, seeing no one and seen by no one but God. God the Provider arranged for the birds to bring them fruit for nourishment. Then they asked the abbot to bring them Holy Communion. Three days after they had received Holy Communion, all three of these holy women reposed, and the monks honorably buried them.

—Prologue of Ohrid

The Nicene Creed: the Symbol of Faith (sung together)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father; by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man; and He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spoke by the prophets.

In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Pre-Communion Prayers (said together)

I believe, O Lord, and I confess that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Who camest into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. I believe also that this is truly Thine own pure Body, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Therefore I pray Thee: have mercy upon me and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance. And make me worthy to partake without condemnation of Thy most pure Mysteries, for the remission of my sins, and unto life everlasting. Amen.

Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss; but like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord in Thy Kingdom.

May the communion of Thy Holy Mysteries be neither to my judgment, nor to my condemnation, O Lord, but to the healing of soul and body. Amen.

