

there is a blessing of the waters for the enlightenment of the people, throughout the cities and villages.”

On this day, a feast was established of the All-Merciful Savior Christ God, and of the Most Pure Virgin, in honor of the victory of Grand Prince Andrei Bogolubsky over the Volga Bulgars, and of the Greek Emperor Michael over the Saracens.

According to Orthodox Church tradition, on this day the Cross is venerated (according to the rubrics of the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross during Great Lent), and a lesser blessing of the waters is served. Together with the blessing of the waters, new honey is also blessed. (This is where the Russian folk name for the feast, “Savior of the honey,” comes from.) *Official site of the Moscow Patriarchate*  
*Translated by Pravoslavie.ru/OrthoChristian.com*

### **The Dormition Fast at St. Maximus**

The Dormition Fast offers an abundance of spiritual good packed into two weeks. Besides daily services and the usual Saturday Vigil and Sunday Liturgy, there will be three Liturgies each week and a total of three extra Vigils: for Transfiguration, for St. Maximus, and for Dormition. Following the Fast, Fr. Justin will depart on his family vacation, so take advantage of the season to worship, to confess, and to commune.

In some monasteries, the fasts are observed with a doubling of the cell rule, which would correspond to our prayer rule at home. If someone normally does a dozen prostrations, he would do twenty-four; if he normally says three ropes of the Jesus Prayer, he would say six; if he normally reads one kathisma from the Psalter a day, he would read two. This is a simple way to increase prayer during the Fast. Of course, if one is to do this, one must lay aside some of one's usual activities to make time, which is why Orthodox Christians cut back or cut out entertainments and unnecessary secular events during a fast.

The essence of prayer cannot be reduced to quantity. Prayer should have quality, which means we pray with attention, with feeling, with faith, with love. Yet to achieve quality in prayer, quantity is needed. A person will master no skill or body of knowledge without a significant quantity of time spent occupied with it. “Practice makes perfect,” it is said. So with prayer, our regular practice of it with attention and feeling will move us towards mastery.

May God grant us all increase in prayer and grace during this Dormition Fast.

### **Clergy Guidelines of the OCA, cont.**

The Confessor's Tongue *will contain sections from the “Guidelines for Clergy” of the OCA over the summer. One might ask, if they are for the clergy, why print them for the laity? We do so because there is mutual accountability in the Church. The laity should be aware of the duties of the clergy, as well as of their own duties. The disciplines provided in the guidelines are those of the Church, not merely the opinion of any particular bishop or priest. By reading, knowing, and conforming to these guidelines, both the clergy and laity prove to be faithful and honorable members of the*

*Body of Christ. Please read these carefully, and if you have questions or desire clarification on any point, please ask your parish priest.*

### **B. Priests & Deacons, cont.**

16. A clergyman should have personal liability insurance coverage and coverage for the personal contents of his rectory (i.e. clergy homeowner's /renter's insurance). The parish should assume the cost of insuring the rectory if it owns it. The contents of the rectory which are personal to the priest should be insured, with coverage cost assumed by the priest. Likewise, the parish must cover the insurance costs for the contents belonging to the parish.

17. A clergyman may not claim a personal right of ownership to any property of the parish he is serving unless it has been specified by mutual written agreement with the official parish representatives. To clarify this matter, it is appropriate for an inventory of parish items to be made each time there is a transfer of clergy.

18. A clergyman may not enter into any contractual agreement or otherwise engage in a business enterprise which, by its nature, may cause scandal or jeopardize the assets of the parish to which he has been assigned, or which might subject the parish to any claim, lawsuit, or other liability arising from such activity.

19. A clergyman may not seek secular employment in addition to his parochial responsibilities without the previous blessing of the diocesan hierarch and the knowledge of the parish.

20. Before a clergyman may begin to seek an assignment in a diocese other than the one in which he is presently serving, he must first receive the blessing of his hierarch.

### **C. The Laity**

1. No one may schedule any liturgical service without the approval of the rector of the parish. This also applies to meetings affecting the life of the parish.

2. No one may invite any clergy to participate in a liturgical service without the approval of the rector.

*To be continued...*

### **Upcoming Events 2014**

6 August: Transfiguration  
11 August: Parish Council Meeting  
13 August: St. Maximus & Leavetaking of Transfiguration  
15 August: Dormition of the Theotokos  
18 August: Fr. Justin leaves on vacation

**GLORY BE TO GOD IN ALL THINGS!**

# The Confessor's Tongue for August 3, A. D. 2014

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost; Venerable Isaac, Dalmatus, Faustus

In honor of St. Maximus the Confessor, whose tongue and right hand were cut off in an attempt by compromising authorities to silence his uncompromising confession of Christ's full humanity & divinity.

---

---

## The Dormition Fast

The Dormition fast was established as preceding the great feasts of the Transfiguration of the Lord and of the Dormition of the Mother of God. It lasts two weeks—from August 1/14–August 14/27 (old style/new style).

The Dormition fast comes down to us from the early days of Christianity.

We find a clear reference to the Dormition fast in a conversation of Leo the Great from around the year 450 A.D. “The Church fasts are situated in the year in such a way that a special abstinence is prescribed for each time. Thus, for spring there is the spring fast—the Forty Days [Great Lent]; for summer there is the summer fast... [the Apostles' fast]; for autumn there is the autumn fast, in the seventh month [Dormition fast]; for winter there is the winter fast [Nativity fast].”

St. Symeon of Thessalonica writes that, “The fast in August [Dormition fast] was established in honor of the Mother of God the Word; Who, foreknowing Her repose, ascetically labored and fasted for us as always, although She was holy and immaculate, and had no need for fasting. Thus, She especially prayed for us in preparation for being transported from this life to the future life, when Her blessed soul would be united through the Divine spirit with Her Son. Therefore, we also should fast and praise Her, emulating Her life, urging Her thereby to pray for us. Some, by the way, say that this fast was instituted on the occasion of two feasts—the Transfiguration and the Dormition. I also consider it necessary to remember these two feasts—one which gives us light, and the other which is merciful to us and intercedes for us.”

The Dormition fast is not as strict as the Great Fast, but it is stricter than the Apostle's and Nativity fasts.

On Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays of the Dormition fast, the Church rubrics prescribe *xerophagy*, that is, the strictest fast of uncooked food (without oil); on Tuesdays and Thursdays, “with cooked food, but with no oil”; on Saturdays and Sundays wine and oil are allowed.

Until the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, when grapes and apples are blessed in the churches, the Church requires that we abstain from these fruits. According to the tradition of the holy fathers, “If one of the brethren should eat the grapes before the feast, then let him be forbidden for obedience's sake to taste of the grapes during the entire month of August.”

On the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the Church rubrics allow fish. After that day, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the fruits of the new harvest would always be included in the meals.

The spiritual fast is closely united with the bodily, just as our soul is united with the body, penetrates it, enlivens it, and makes one united whole with it, as the soul and body make one living human being. Therefore, in fasting bodily we must at the same time fast spiritually: “Brothers, in fasting bodily let us also fast spiritually, severing all union with unrighteousness,” the Holy Church enjoins us.

The main thing in fasting bodily is restraint from abundant, tasty, and sweet foods; the main thing in fasting spiritually is restraint from passionate, sinful movements that indulge our sensual inclinations and vices. The former is renunciation of the more nourishing foods for fasting food, which is less nourishing; the latter is the renunciation of our favorite sins for exercise in the virtues which oppose them.

The essence of the fast is expressed in the following Church hymn: “If you fast from food, my soul, but are not purified of the passions, in vain do we comfort ourselves by not eating. For if the fast does not bring correction, then it will be hateful to God as false, and you will be like unto the evil demons, who never eat.”

The Great fast and the Dormition fast are particularly strict with regard to entertainment—in Imperial Russia even civil law forbade public masquerades and shows during these fasts.

The Dormition fast begins on the feast of the “Procession of the Wood of the Life-Giving Cross of the Lord.”

In the Greek horologion of 1897, the origin of this feast is explained: “Because of the illnesses that occur very often during August, the custom was established in Constantinople of processing the Precious Wood of the Cross through the roads and streets to sanctify places and prevent disease. On the eve of the feast it was carried out of the royal treasury and placed upon the holy table of the Great Church (the Hagia Sophia, dedicated to the Holy Wisdom of God). From that day until the Dormition of the Most Pure Theotokos, lityas were served throughout the city, and the Wood of the Cross was then offered to the people for veneration. This was the procession of the Precious Cross.”

In the Russian Orthodox Church, this feast was linked with the remembrance of the Baptism of Russia in 988. The memory of the day of the Baptism of Russia was preserved in the Chronologies of the sixteenth century, which state that, “Grand Prince Vladimir of Kiev and All Rus was baptized on August 1.” In the *Discussion of active rites of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church on the Dormition*, written in 1627 at the request of Patriarch Philaret of Moscow and All Russia, the feast on August 1 is described: “During the procession on the day of the Precious Cross,