



## St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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### Afterfeast of the Nativity of the Mother of God & Martyrs Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora at Nicomedia September 10, 2017

#### **Troparion – Tone 5**

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.

#### **Troparion – Tone 4**

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.

#### **Troparion – Tone 1**

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.

#### **Kontakion – Tone 5**

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!

#### **Kontakion – Tone 4**

Invincible in your struggles for the Holy Trinity, and through your love for each other as sisters, ye defeated the foe of the spiritual life, and with the five virgins, entered victoriously into the heavenly mansions // where ye ever rejoice with the angels in the presence of the King of all!

#### **Kontakion – Tone 4**

By thy nativity, 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.”

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 6**

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

*v: To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!*

#### **Prokeimenon – Tone 3**

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

## **Martyrs Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora at Nicomedia**

The Holy Virgins Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora (305-311), were sisters from Bithynia (Asia Minor). Distinguished for their special piety, they wanted to preserve their virginity and avoid worldly associations. They chose a solitary place for themselves in the wilderness and spent their lives in deeds of fasting and prayer.

Reports of the holy life of the virgins soon spread, since healings of the sick began to occur through their prayers. The Bithynia region was governed at that time by a man named Frontonus, who ordered that the sisters be arrested and brought before him.

At first he tried to persuade them to renounce Christ, promising great honors and rewards. But the holy sisters steadfastly confessed their faith before him, rejecting all his suggestions. They told him that they did not value the temporal things of this world, and that they were prepared to die for their Heavenly Bridegroom, for death would be their gateway to eternal life.

Flying into a rage, the governor took out his wrath on Saint Menodora, the eldest sister. She was stripped of her clothes and beaten by four men, while a herald urged her to offer sacrifice to the gods. The saint bravely endured the torments and cried out, "Sacrifice? Can't you see that I am offering myself as a sacrifice to my God?" Then they renewed their torments with even greater severity. Then the martyr cried out, " Lord Jesus Christ, joy of my heart, my hope, receive my soul in peace." With these words she gave up her soul to God, and went to her Heavenly Bridegroom.

Four days later, they brought the two younger sisters Metrodora and Nymphodora to the court. They showed them the battered body of their older sister to frighten them. The virgins wept over her, but remained steadfast.

Then Saint Metrodora was tortured. She died, crying out to her beloved Lord Jesus Christ with her last breath. Then they turned to the third sister, Nymphodora. Before her lay the bruised bodies of her sisters. Frontonus hoped that this sight would intimidate the young virgin.

Pretending that he was charmed by her youth and beauty, he urged her to worship the pagan gods, promising great rewards and honors. Saint Nymphodora scoffed at his words, and shared the fate of her older sisters. She was tortured and beaten to death with iron rods.

The bodies of the holy martyrs were to be burned in a fire, but a heavy rain extinguished the blazing fire, and lightning struck down Frontonus and his servant. Christians took up the bodies of the holy sisters and reverently buried them at the so-called Warm Springs at Pythias (Bithynia).

Part of the relics of the holy martyrs are preserved on Mt. Athos in the Protection cathedral of the Saint Panteleimon Russian monastery, and the hand of Saint Metrodora is on the Holy Mountain in the monastery of the Pantocrator.

## **Epistle: Galatians 6:11-16**

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

## **Epistle: 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: John 3:13-17**

No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

### **Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14**

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'" But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

### **Service Schedule for the week of September 10**

**Today** – 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by a prayer service for the Church School children;  
Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

**Wednesday September 13** – Vespers with Litya, 7:00 PM

**Thursday September 14** – Elevation of the Cross – Divine Liturgy 9:00 AM

**Saturday September 16** – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

**Sunday September 17** – 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

### **Weekly Giving**

September 3 – 40 adults , 8 youth , \$1,397

### **Parish Announcements**

Catechumen/Orthodoxy classes are held every other Saturday unless otherwise announced. The next class will be held in the church on Saturday September 23 at 3:30 PM. Everyone is invited to the classes, but all Catechumens are required to attend.

There will be a Parish Council meeting on Tuesday September 12 at 7:00 PM.

Pierogi Sale – Help is needed on Friday Sept. 15 at 4:00 PM in Daria Hall to peel potatoes and prepare the pierogi filling. Help is also needed on Saturday Sept. 16 at 8:00 AM to make the pierogies. Any questions contact Nadja Nowicki at 609-695-2252. There is a sign-up sheet in church to place your pierogi order!

The annual Parish Picnic will be held on Sunday September 24 at the church picnic grounds in Hamilton. There is an attendance sign-up sheet on the table across from the candle desk. We ask everyone to please sign up so we can properly prepare. There is also a space on the sign-up sheet to indicate what you may be willing to bring as

the church will be providing the meats and beverages. The grounds will need some sprucing up prior to the picnic – we will announce the clean-up schedule in a few weeks.

The church website – [www.saintvladimir.org](http://www.saintvladimir.org) -- has recently been updated. Please check it out! If you want to add anything to the website, please see Father Volodymyr or Nancy Mitsos.

Remember you are able to purchase Iconostasis and Altar candles! Please see Ludwig at the candle desk.

On Saturday October 21 at 10:00 AM, Natasha Shynkarenko and Caryl Peck's new baby daughter – Katia – will be baptized, and their daughter – Oksana - will be Chrismated in the Orthodox faith. All are invited to the church services.

During Hurricane Harvey, Gabriele, who was the live-in caretaker for 3 years for Martha Lutz up until Martha's passing in May 2016, reached out to me and asked for prayers for her son and his family in Texas. They were right in the path of the Hurricane and lost everything due to flooding and devastation. Gabrielle would faithfully bring Martha to church on Sundays and Holy Days, and generously donated items for our Coffee Hour and events. Below is what is written on her son's gofundme page:

On August 25th, hurricane Harvey brought a path of destruction across the gulf coast. Our house was the first to take on water. As the water quickly rose we were rushing to raise our things off the ground in hopes that the water wouldn't get that high. In the middle of us raising the furniture, the water started filling the house making us abandon what we were doing and head to our grandmas. We went to her house for shelter knowing it was on higher ground and has never gotten higher than the curb in the 51 years that she is live there. Unfortunately the water rose inch after inch, foot after foot, To the point we saw no slowing down of the rising water and had to evacuate her house as well. The water ended up rising approximately four feet from street level to her foundation and another 4 feet up her walls to where everything was lost including all of the kids' clothes, toys, game consoles, her car, our truck, the entire contents of both houses, all my business equipment, trailer, and everything in the sheds. Being as we were displaced and far from home neither of us is able to go to work and with the equipment under water I couldn't work even if I wanted to. We don't like asking for help for taking handouts, but at this point we don't have much choice and every bit will help. Especially because we didn't have renters insurance on our house. Grandma did have flood and homeowners as well as full coverage on her car and we had full coverage on our truck. So that will help. But will take some time. So besides what insurance will cover, we still have everything else to replace. We have already spent a good chunk on replacing some of the very basics for 6 people like a few outfits for each of us, food, toiletries, and the normal everyday items that were lost. We all feel very blessed that we were able to stick together through all of this and things weren't any worse than what they were.

If you would like to make a donation, please go to [gofundme.com](http://gofundme.com) and in the search area at the top of the page next to the gofundme logo, type in Johnson/Hogg Hurricane Harvey Relief. A picture of their flooded home will display; click on the picture and you will be directed to the funding page. Or, there is a basket in the back of church for a collection today and next Sunday – the funds will be sent to Gabriele who will forward them to her son. Thank you for your generosity.