

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- ✧ Come to Church as a family to celebrate the Feast Day. If you cannot come on the Feast itself, come on the eve of the Feast.
- ✧ As a family, read the Scriptural references for the Dormition and discuss the significance of the Feast.
- ✧ Discuss the Dormition icon with your children. Teach them about all the figures represented on the icon. If you have this icon in your home, display it in your family's place of prayer for veneration.
- ✧ This Feast has an “afterfeast” period of 8 days. Use the Troparion and Kontakion hymns as prayers before and/or after meals, and as a part of your children's evening prayers during this period.
- ✧ On this Feast, the Church blesses flowers. Have your children pick and prepare a bouquet of flowers to bring to the Church to be blessed. Use them to decorate an icon or the family table. Make an extra bouquet for someone who cannot come to Church and present it to them.



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# COME CELEBRATE THE FEAST: THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS





## THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS CELEBRATED ON AUGUST 15

The Feast of the Dormition or the Falling Asleep of the Theotokos is... preceded by a two week fast. This feast, which is also sometimes called the “Assumption,” commemorates the death, resurrection, and glorification of Christ’s Mother. It proclaims that Mary has been “assumed” by God into the heavenly kingdom of Christ in the fullness of her spiritual and bodily existence.

As with the Nativity of the Virgin and the feast of her Entrance to the Temple, there are no biblical or historical sources for this feast. The Tradition of the Church is that Mary died as all people die, not “voluntarily” as her Son, but by the necessity of her mortal human nature which is indivisibly bound up with the corruption of this world.

...the Church proclaims that Mary truly needed to be saved by Christ as all human persons are saved from trials, sufferings, and death of this world; and that having truly died, she was raised up by her Son as the Mother of Life and participates already in the eternal life of paradise which is prepared and promised to all who “hear the word of God and keep it.” (Lk 11:27, 28)... Finally,... [we celebrate the fact that] what happens to Mary happens to all who imitate her holy life of humility, obedience, and love (Fr. Thomas Hopko, *The Orthodox Faith: Volume 2, Worship*).

### FROM CHURCH TRADITION

Following the day of Pentecost, the Theotokos remained in the city of Jerusalem, comforting the infant Christian community. At the time of

her death (tradition states she was in her early fifties) many of the apostles were scattered throughout the world preaching the Gospel. However, they all returned to Jerusalem upon learning of her death. All arrived in time for the burial, except St. Thomas. When the other apostles showed him the tomb in Gethsemane, where she had been buried near her parents, they discovered the tomb empty. Church tradition relates that she was resurrected bodily and taken to heaven, the same reward that awaits all the righteous on the Last Day.

### THE DORMITION IN SCRIPTURE AND HYMNS

**Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11**

**Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27, 28**

**Matins, First Kanon, Ode 1, Troparia 2**

*O Pure Virgin, you have won the victory over the world by bringing forth God; yet like your Son and Creator, you have submitted to the laws of nature in a manner above nature. Therefore, in falling asleep, you have risen to live eternally with your Son.*

**Divine Liturgy, Troparion, Tone 1**

*In giving birth, you preserved your virginity! In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos! You were translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death!*

**Divine Liturgy, Kontakion, Tone 2**

*Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, she was translated to life by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb!*

