

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church
(Dormition of the Mother of God)**

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Sunday October 22, 2017

The Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos, commemorating the deliverance from the Poles in 1612; Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Abercius (Averkios), Bishop and Wonder-worker of Hierapolis; the Holy Seven Youths ("Seven Sleepers") of Ephesus (see August 4); Martyrs Alexander the bishop, Heraclius, Anna, Elizabeth, Theodota and Glyceria, at Adrianopolis; Saint Lot of Egypt; Saints Theodore and Paul, Abbots of Rostov; Saint James of Luga and Omutch, disciple of St. Theophilus of Omutch; Martyr Zachariah; Saint Rufus of the Paradise; Saint Cecilia the Martyr; Saint Mellon, Bishop of Rouen; repose of Righteous Monk Joseph the Silent of Kuban

Services for the week of October 22

Thursday, October 26 9:00 am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Demetrius of Thessalonica

Saturday, October 28: 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Parish News

WELCOME: to all of our guests today. We are so glad that you have come to enjoy our Orthodox worship. We invite you to come for coffee and sweets in our church hall and to enjoy fellowship with us. May God bless you!

OFFERINGS: October 15: \$1481.00

PLEASE REMEMBER Janet Mikel and Martha Smith who are suffering from serious illness. May God continue to bless and strengthen them!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Michael Vrienceanu who turns 18 years old today! May God grant him and his family many blessed years of health and happiness.

PLEASE REMEMBER Marin Sandu (Dr. Alina's stepfather) who has recently undergone surgery at home in Romania. May God speedily grant him healing and may he look upon our fervent prayer with love.

HOMILY on the beauty of Christ above all other beauty

Thou art fairer than the sons of men (Psalm 45:2).

Holy Scripture does not ascribe any particular value to physical beauty, and in general to anything transient. That is why everyone who reads Holy Scripture should take care to be sufficiently attentive and wise to transfer the praise of physical beauty to the soul and to spiritual values. Without a doubt, spiritual beauty gives a wondrous attractiveness to the most unattractive body, just as an ugly soul makes even the most attractive body repulsive. The Prophet David, *pouring forth good words* (Psalm 45:1), says to his King, the Lord Jesus Christ: *Thou art fairer than the sons of men*. The Lord Himself created His bodily cloak as He wanted. Had He wanted to appear in the world as the physically fairest of men, He could have done so. But there is nothing in the Gospel to indicate that He drew followers to Himself or influenced men by His appearance. He Himself said: *the flesh profiteth nothing* (John 6:63). Therefore, it is clear that David was not speaking of the physical beauty of Christ, but of His spiritual, divine beauty. This is clearly seen in the following words of the Psalmist: *Grace is poured forth upon thy lips* (Psalm 45:2). So it is that the unsurpassed beauty of the Son of God is not in the form and shape of His lips, but rather in the stream of grace that flows from His mouth. Again, the Prophet Isaiah speaks of Christ: *He had no form or comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him* (Isaiah 53:2-3). Do Isaiah and David agree? Perfectly well. David speaks of Christ's inward beauty, and Isaiah speaks of Christ's external abasement. Isaiah said that He would not be seen as a king or a rich man, but as a servant and sufferer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art fairer to us than all men and angels: glory to Thine immortal and unending beauty. O gracious Lord, correct the ugliness of our souls, which are disfigured by sin, we pray Thee.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.