

# **THE LIGHT OF THE EAST**



## **St. Athanasius the Great** **Byzantine Catholic Church**

**1117 South Blaine Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46221**

**Served by:**

**Pastor: Very Rev. Protopresbyter Bryan R. Eyman. D. Min. D. Phil.**

**Cantors: Marcus Loidolt, John Danovich**

**Office Manager: John Danovich**

**Phones:           Rectory: 317-632-4157; Pastor's Cell Phone: 216-780-2555**  
**FAX: 317-632-2988**

### **WEEKEND DIVINE SERVICES**

**Sat: 5 PM [Vespers with Liturgy]**

**Sun: 9:45 AM [Third Hour] 10 AM [Divine Liturgy]**

**Mystery of Holy Repentance [Confessions]: AFTER Saturday  
Evening Prayer or ANYTIME by appointment**

**GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY TO HIM FOREVER!**

**DIVINE SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 11, 2013**

**TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.**

**POST-FESTIVE DAY OF TRANSFIGURATION. The Holy Martyr Euplus.**  
**PLEASE COME FORWARD AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY; KISS**  
**THE HOLY ICONS, RECEIVE THE HOLY ANOINTING, &**  
**PARTAKE OF THE ANTIDORAN [BLESSED BREAD].**

**SAT. AUGUST 10 5 PM VIGIL LITURGY *For the People***

**6:15 PM MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE**

**SUN. AUGUST 11 9:45 AM THIRD HOUR**

**10 AM LITURGY of Thanksgiving for 28 years from Fr.**  
***Bryan's Presbyteral ordination***

**11:15 AM ANNIVERSARY BRUNCH**  
**[IN ST. MARY'S HALL]**

**MON. AUGUST 12 The Holy Martyrs Photius and Anictus.**

**NO DIVINE SERVICES ~ FATHER'S DAY OFF**

**TUE. AUGUST 13 Leave-taking of the Transfiguration. Our Ven. Fr. Maximus**  
**the Confessor**

**NO DIVINE SERVICES**

**WED. AUGUST 14 Pre-festive Day of The Dormition. The Holy Prophet**  
**Micah. Trans. of the Relics of our Father Theodosius,**  
**Hegumen of the Pecherskaya Lavra.**

**7 PM VESPER LITURGY *For the People***

**[FULFILLS DORMITION OBLIGATION]**

**8:15 PM BLESSING OF FLOWERS AND HERBS**

**8:30 PM PANACHIDA *For Fr. Sid Sidor [1 YEAR]***

**THU. AUGUST 15 THE DORMITION OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS.**

**NO DIVINE SERVICES~PLEASE ATTEND VIGIL**

**FRI. AUGUST 16 Post-festive Day of the Dormition. The Holy Martyr**  
**Diomedes. Translation of the Icon of our Lord "not made**  
**by human hands" from Edessa to Constatinople [944 ad].**

**NO DIVINE SERVICES**

**SAT. AUGUST 17 Post-festive Day of the Dormition. The Holy Martyr**  
**Myron.**

**5 PM VESPER LITURGY +*Virginia Kosmo by Friends***

**6:15 PM MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE**

**[CONFESSIONS]**

**CHRIST IS AMONG US! HE IS AND SHALL BE!**

**SUN. AUGUST 18 THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.**

**Postfestive Day of the Dormition. The Holy Martyrs  
Florus and Laurus.**

**9:45 AM THE THIRD HOUR**

**10 AM LITURGY FOR THE PEOPLE**

**11:15 AM COFFEE SOCIAL [IN ST. MARY'S HALL]**



**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11 –  
LITURGY BEGINS ON PAGE 11**

**PROPERS FOR THE LITURGY  
ARE FOUND ON PAGES 133 TO  
137 [TONE 3] AND 352 TO 355  
[FOR TRANSFIGURATION] OR  
ON THE COLORED SHEET  
FOUND IN THIS CHURCH  
BULLETIN.**

**VESPERS PROPERS**

**ARE FOUND ON PAGES 135-136  
AND PAGE 347**

***Vigil Liturgy begins on page 104 of  
the Blue-Green Pew Book. We  
switch to the Liturgy portion at***

***“Holy God” pages 28-30.***

**YOUR GIFT TO THE LORD FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 4, 2013**

**Weekly . . . . . \$1,269.20** *Many thanks to all who contribute*  
**Candles . . . . . \$110.50** *generously to St. Athanasius*  
**Total Collections \$1,379.70** *Parish. Your support is needed*  
**Fund-raising sales \$802.75** *and most appreciated.*  
**Weekly Total \$2,182.45**

***We need a weekly income of \$3000.00 to properly operate YOUR Parish.***  
***WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE!***

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:** our parishioners, family members, friends and others who are ill or infirm: **AMY CHIAPPE, ETHAN EYMAN, CULVER "RED" EYMAN, BOBBI SPAK, JULIE COLLINS, BJ NOVAK, DONALD STEIN, ELAINE WILSON, DEREK ANTHONY.**

*If you know of someone who should be added to our sick list please put it in writing and give it to Father, or call the Parish Office. If you wish Father to bring someone Holy Communion at home, please call Father.*

## **EPARCHY OF PARMA ~ GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**SEPTEMBER 20 TO 22, 2013**

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**

**BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL**

**1900 CARLTON ROAD PARMA OHIO.**

*You should have received an invitation in the mail. Please Register and play a real part in the spiritual renewal of yourself and your Eparchy of Parma.*

<b><u>Candles Available</u></b>	<b><u>Monthly Donation</u></b>	<b><u>Intention</u></b>	<b><u>Sponsor</u></b>
Eternal Lamp	\$40.00	Healing of Dr. Bicani	Marge Hayes
Icon Screen (6)	\$35.00	Juliana Peresie	Henry Peresie
Tetrapod (2)	\$30.00	Special Intention	Al Macek
Nativity Icon	\$25.00	In Thanksgiving	Richard Medwig
Theotokos of Vladimir Icon	\$25.00	Special Intention	Glen Grabow
Resurrection Icon	\$25.00	Sonia Stanton	Danny Enciso
Annuciation Tryptych	\$25.00	Family & friends	Olga Vaughn

**Give a spiritual Gift to someone in need.** We have candle Gift Cards you can send or give to a loved one, friend or someone in need of prayers. A single 6-day candle is \$5. For an entire month the cost is \$25. When giving your donation use the candle envelope in the back of the Church. Paired with it, take the candle card to give as a gift. In addition to the name on the candle, please specify a start date if you would like the Church to light the candle[s] in front of the Icons of our Lord or the Theotokos for you on a future date.

**You are the Light of the World! Let your Light shine before men!**

**Upcoming Holy Days & Special Services at St. Athanasius Church**

- WED. Aug. 14**      **7 PM VIGIL LITURGY OF THE DORMITION  
BLESSING OF FLOWERS AND HERBS  
8:15 PM 1YEAR ANNIVERSARY PANACHIDA  
[TRISAGION SERVICE] FOR FR. SID SIDOR**
- THU. Aug. 15**      **FEAST OF THE HOLY DORMITION OF THE  
MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS  
PLEASE ATTEND THE VIGIL LITURGY**
- SAT. Aug. 17**      **5 PM VIGIL LITURGY  
6:15 PM MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE  
[CONFESSIONS]**
- SUN. Aug. 18**      **THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
9:45 AM THE THIRD HOUR  
10 AM DIVINE LITURGY  
11:15 AM COFFEE SOCIAL**
- WED. Aug. 21**      **7 PM PARAKLIS TO THE HOLY THEOTOKOS  
AND MYSTERY OF HOLY ANOINTING  
[HEALING SERVICE]**
- SAT. Aug. 24**      **5 PM VIGIL LITURGY  
6:15 PM MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE**
- SUN. Aug. 25**      **14 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
9:45 AM THE THIRD HOUR  
10 AM DIVINE LITURGY  
11:15 AM COFFEE SOCIAL**
- WED. Aug. 28**      **7 PM VESPER LITURGY OF THE BEHEADING  
OF ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER**

## Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

### Feast of the Holy Transfiguration

## In Your Light We See Light

“I am the Light of the world”

(*Jn*8:12). These familiar words of the Lord Jesus reflect one of the most popular images in the Scriptures, but what do they mean? How is Jesus the light of the world?

The rest of this verse (pardon the expression) ‘sheds light’ on what is meant here. “*I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.*” Here and in a number of other places Jesus is portrayed as a beacon: one who guides along the right path,



who illumines the way for us. He is the “Giver of light,” the One bringing light to our hearts. To say He is light in this way is to talk about what He does.

But there is another way to see Christ as light. He is light, not only because of what He does for us but because of what He is. “*God is light and in Him is no darkness at all*” (1 *Jn* 1:5). God is not described here as light illumining our minds and hearts, but as He is in Himself: Light in His innermost being.

Based on the Gospel message, the Church proclaims the Lord Jesus as “Light from Light” (Nicene Creed), the “Radiant Light of the Immortal Father, the Heavenly, the Holy, the Blessed: Jesus Christ” (3<sup>rd</sup> century vespers hymn). As God is Light in Himself, so too the incarnate Christ is the Light of the Father. “*I and the Father are one*” (*Jn* 10:30).

As far back as the third century the Fathers used our experience of the sun to illustrate this mystery. Like others before him, St. Cyril, the teacher of the Slavs, reflected, “Do you see in the heavens the brilliant sphere of the

## *Feast of the Holy Transfiguration [page 2]*

sun and how from it light is begotten and warmth proceeds? God the Father is like the sphere of the sun, without beginning or end. From Him is eternally begotten God the Son, like light from the sun; just as there comes warmth together with light from the sun, the Holy Spirit proceeds. Each one is distinguished separately: the sphere of the sun and the light and the warmth — these are not three suns, but one sun in the heavens. So also, in the Holy Trinity: there are three Persons, but God is one and indivisible.”

### **The Light of Mt. Tabor**

Christ was concretely manifested as light at His transfiguration:

*“His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light”* (Mt 17:2) – *“white and glistening”* (Lk 9:29), *“such as no launderer on earth can whiten them”* (Mk 9:3). For a moment the disciples glimpsed what had been hidden since the Incarnation: the Word of God, radiant with divine glory, in the person of Jesus.

In icons of the Transfiguration, this radiance is depicted by a geometric figure behind the representation of the Lord called a mandorla. While depictions of Christ during His earthly ministry show His head surrounded by a cross and a halo, icons representing Him in moments beyond time and space (the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, the Dormition) envelop His whole body in this light of glory.

This same figure is found in icons of the conversion of St. Paul. Christ, the “Radiant Light” was manifested to Saul of Tarsus (St. Paul) on the road to Damascus as *“a light from the sky brighter than the sun”* (Acts 26:13)

While this Light briefly blinded Saul by its brilliance, it enabled him to see ever more clearly *“the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed”* (Col 1:26).

In the Church the light experienced by Saul has been identified with the light that shone on Tabor, the Radiant Light of the Father, Jesus Christ. As we sing on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, “Christ who had been radiant in light on the mountain, blinded your bodily eyes; but He allowed your soul to see the Trinity” (from the Canon, Ode 1).

## *Feast of the Holy Transfiguration [page 3]*

### **The “Uncreated Light” of God**

In the Gospels we find two seemingly contradictory understandings of our ability to know God. On the one hand we are told, “*No one has seen God at any time*” (Jn 1:18). On the other hand we hear, “*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*” (Mt 5:8). In the fourth century, St. Gregory of Nyssa showed how both statements are true. He taught that the essence of God was unknowable. Like the sun in the imagery cited above, God in His deepest being is unapproachable. The energies of God – His “Light” and “Warmth” – have been made known to us and we can truly know God in His energies. In the fourteenth century, St. Gregory Palamas applied this teaching to the Transfiguration. He explained that when the Apostles witnessed the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor, that they were seeing the actual uncreated light of God.

### **Reflecting the Divine Light**

We too, Palamas insisted, can experience God’s divine energies even though we can never know His essence: “for those who love each other all nature is filled with the light which seems to radiate from the other.” Many saints who have loved deeply have reflected this light. Perhaps the first was the Protomartyr St. Stephen who witnessed to Christ before the council of Jewish elders in Jerusalem. “*And looking steadfastly on Stephen, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel*” (Acts 6:15).

St Simeon the New Theologian, writing in the eleventh century, described his own experience in similar words: “He gives Himself totally to me, unworthy as I am, and I am filled with His love and beauty. I am sated with pleasure and divine tenderness. I share in the Light. I participate also in the glory. My face shines like that of my beloved and all my members become bearers of Light.”

The most compelling witness to such an experience comes from Nicholas Motovilov. In 1831 he wrote of seeing St Seraphim of Sarov transfigured with the divine light. They had been discussing how



## *Feast of the Holy Transfiguration [page 4]*

a person can acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit but Motovilov was puzzled: “I do not understand how I can be certain that I am in the Spirit of God.” Finally, as he described it, “Father Seraphim took me very firmly by the shoulders and said: ‘We are both in the Spirit of God now, my son. Why don’t you look at me?’

“I replied: ‘I cannot look, Father, because your eyes are flashing like lightning. Your face has become brighter than the sun, and my eyes ache with pain.’

“Father Seraphim said: ‘Don't be alarmed, your Godliness! Now you yourself have become as bright as I am. You are now in the fullness of the Spirit of God yourself; otherwise you would not be able to see me as I am.’

“Then, bending his head towards me, he whispered softly in my ear: ‘Thank the Lord God for His unutterable mercy to us! You saw that I did not even cross myself; and only in my heart I prayed mentally to the Lord God and said within myself: ‘Lord, grant him to see clearly with his bodily eyes that descent of Your Spirit which You grant to Your servants when You are pleased to appear in the light of Your magnificent glory.’ And you see, my son, the Lord instantly fulfilled the humble prayer of poor Seraphim. How then shall we not thank Him for this unspeakable gift to us both?’”

For a moment the apostles on Tabor saw the light of God which is Christ’s by nature. Likewise for a moment Nicholas Motovilov saw the light of God indwelling by grace in the person who is in Christ.

**Special Parish Meeting ~ please join us for an informal Parish Meeting after the 10 AM Divine Liturgy on Sunday August 18, 2013. The purpose of the Meeting is to have an initial discussion of Parish Priorities and Mission. It is not a gripe session, so bring your POSITIVE outlook and insights to this important meeting. Please also be prepared to volunteer in the work of advancing God’s Kingdom and St. Athanasius the Great Parish. We look forward to your participation, action and support!**

## FATHER'S LITURGICAL CORNER

Father, what is the anointing that you do after the Holy Day Vespers and Liturgy and the weekend after the Holy Day? What about the bread you distribute at that time? The



Anointing you are asking about is called "Mirovanije" and also includes the distribution of bread blessed for the occasion. During Great Vespers [Evening Prayer] for a major feast, the clergy and acolytes process to the vestibule of the Temple [Church Building], for a series of special hymns and litany. This is called the Litija and is a reminder of the All-Night Vigil that preceded every Sunday and Holy Day. Originally Great Vespers began in one Temple and a procession was held leading the people to the city's Great Temple, the Cathedral. Here the Artoklasia or "Breaking of the bread" takes place with the blessing of Five Loaves of Bread. Bulgar wheat, wine and oil, at the Tetrapod. Then as the All Night Vigil continued the people were anointed and the food items distributed to sustain the faithful during the Vigil.



Today the usual practice is to anoint the people with the blessed "Oil of Gladness" and distribute the blessed bread at the conclusion of Great Vespers, during Matins [Morning Prayer], and after the Divine Liturgy on the Holy Day and the Sunday thereafter. It is also customary for the people to provide a donation [usually a dollar or more] for the use of the priest celebrating the Divine Service.

In the Parma Eparchy Mirovanije is taken on the Holy Day itself and the Sunday thereafter for Holy Days of Obligation, Solemn Holy Days and the patronal feast of the parish in addition to the feasts of the Holy Pascha [Resurrection] and Pentecost.

# **4<sup>th</sup> Annual European Festival**

**Saturday September 7, 2013**

**11 AM ~ 11 PM**

**St. Mary Magdalene**

**Byzantine Catholic Church**

**5390 W. 220thSt. Fairview Park Ohio**

**Phone Number: 440-734-4644**

**Come, See, Taste**

**& Experience Cultures from across Europe!**

***Music, Food, Performances, Dancing. Beer Garden, Children's Activities, Church Tours, Raffles.***

**Father, why do you add water to the chalice just before Holy Communion? Since the elements are already the Body and Blood of Christ, isn't it disrespectful to add something to the Precious Blood?** After the Fractioning of the LAMB [Ahnac, in Church Slavonic], the priest immediately places the particle marked "IC" [for Jesus] into the Chalice. While he is doing this, the acolyte prepares and brings to him a small pitcher of Hot Water. This is called the "Zeon" [in Greek] or "Teplota" [in Church Slavonic]. It is symbolic of the warm blood and water that poured from the side of the pierced Christ. It is used in all Byzantine Churches both Orthodox and Catholic, and has been since at least the 4<sup>th</sup> Century. When the Deacon brings the vessel to the Presbyter, the Presbyter blesses it saying: "Blessed is the fervor of the Holy Ones, now and ever and forever!" Then pouring it in the Deacon says "The fervor of faith, filled with the Holy Spirit."



**St. Maximus the Confessor** (ca. 580-662) was an Orthodox Catholic Christian monk and ascetical writer known especially for his courageous fight against the heresy of Monothelitism. His feast days in the Church are celebrated on January 21 and, for the translation of his relics, on August 13.

He was born in the region of Constantinople, was well educated, and spent some time in government service before becoming a monk, having been a member of the old Byzantine aristocracy and holding the post of Imperial Secretary under Emperor Heraclius. Around 614, he became a monk (later Archimandrite or abbot) at the monastery of Chrysopolis. During the Persian invasion of the Empire (614), he fled to Africa.

From about 640 on, he became the determined opponent of Monothelitism, the heretical teaching that Jesus Christ had only one will. In this, he followed the example of St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, who was the first to combat this heresy starting in 634.

Maximus supported the Orthodoxy of Rome on this matter and is said to have exclaimed: "I have the faith of the Latins, but the language of the Greeks." He argued for Dyothelitism, the Orthodox teaching that Jesus Christ possessed two wills (one divine and one human), rather than the one will posited by Monothelitism.

After Pyrrhus, the temporarily deposed Monothelite Patriarch of Constantinople, had declared his defeat in a dispute at Carthage (645), Maximus obtained the heresy's condemnation at several local synods in Africa, and also worked to have it condemned at the Lateran Council of 649. He was brought to Constantinople in 653, pressured to adhere to the *Typos* of Emperor Constans II. Refusing to do so, he was exiled to Thrace. (Pope St. Martin of Rome was tried around the same time in Constantinople, and thus

## St. Maximus the Confessor [Pg. 2]

deposed and exiled to Crimea. The last Pope thus far to die as a martyr for the Faith.)

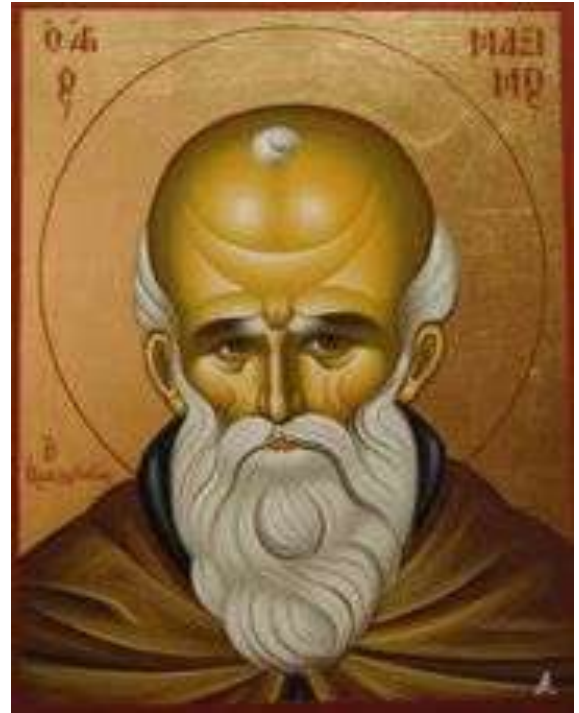
In 661 Maximus again was brought to the imperial capital and questioned; while there, he had his tongue uprooted and his right hand cut off (to prevent him from preaching or writing the Orthodox Faith), and then was again exiled to the Caucasus, but died shortly thereafter.

Ultimately, Maximus was exonerated by the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 680-681 and recognized as a Father of the Church.

He left many writings (some of which are collected in the *Philokalia*) that are still widely read today; some are doctrinal, but many more describe the contemplative life and offer spiritual advice. He also wrote widely on liturgical and exegetical subjects. His theological work was later continued by St. Simeon the New Theologian and by St. Gregory Palamas.

His writings include:

- *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*—65 questions and answers on difficult passages of Holy Scripture
- *Ambigua*—an exegetical work on St. Gregory the Theologian
- Paraphrases of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite (though many of the works that have come down under Maximus' name are now held to be the work of John of Scythopolis, who wrote in the first half of the 6th century, some 100 years before Maximus)
- Several dogmatic treatises against the Monothelites
- *Liber Asceticus*            + *Capita de Caritate*
- *Mystagogia*—a mystical interpretation of the Divine Liturgy



**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY ESPECIALLY THOSE SERVING IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ.**

**MAJOR CRAIG M. EYMAN DO~** is Fr. Bryan's 2<sup>nd</sup> youngest brother. He has reentered the Army Reserve and is currently serving with the 848<sup>th</sup> FST [Forward Surgical Team] stationed in Twinsburg, OH. He has been deployed to Bagram, Afghanistan.

**CAPTAIN BRIAN HEWKO~** has been a friend of Fr. Bryan. Brian is from St. Anne Byzantine Catholic Church in Austinburg, OH. He is a 2008 graduate of West Point. Brian became a Captain in the U. S. Army on July 1, 2011, and has been deployed to Afghanistan during 2011 and 2012. Brian is currently serving our Republic at Ft. Drum, NY, where he is a helicopter pilot. He thanks you for your prayerful support.

**CAPTAIN CHRISTINA MOMONIER~** is a friend of Fr. Bryan. Christina is from Baltimore, MD and was received into the Byzantine Catholic Church at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. She is currently serving at Ft. Drum, NY.

**CAPTAIN [FATHER] JOSEPH BRANKATELLI USA ~** is a friend of Fr. Bryan and a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland and the Archdiocese for the Military Services USA. Fr. Joseph is currently deployed and serving in Bagram, Afghanistan.

**SPECIALIST 3 KATIE WELLER USAF~** Katie is the sister of Donnie and Johann Weller and is currently serving with the Air Force in Virginia. She is a member of St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church in Harrisburg, PA. Before entering the Armed Forces she was active with the BYZANTEEN Youth Rallies.

**AIRMEN FIRST CLASS JOHANN WELLER USAF~** Johann is the brother of Donnie and Katie Weller. He is from St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church in Harrisburg, PA.

**PRIVATE CODY ROMERO USA, STAFF SERGEANT NIKO ROMERO, and STAFF SERGEANT RORY ROMERO** Sons of Sonia Stanton.

**PRIVATE JACKSON RUANE USA~** Jackson is formerly from St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Parish in Ashtabula, OH. He and his family also frequented Holy Transfiguration Parish in Lake County, OH when Fr. Bryan was Pastor there. He is currently undergoing Basic Training at Ft. Benning, GA. He is scheduled to be deployed to Korea this fall.

If you have a member of the military you would like to have commemorated please write a note to Fr. Bryan or call the Parish Office.

***May God, in His infinite Love and Mercy, guide and protect all of those serving our Republic in the Armed Forces.***

*Welcome to St. Athanasius Byzantine Catholic Church of Indianapolis, IN. We are a Byzantine Catholic Community that, as part of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy [Diocese] of Parma, is in Communion with Pope Francis I and the other Catholic Churches. If you remain until the end of the Divine Liturgy; you will fulfill your Sunday Obligation. [If you leave early you do not fulfill your Sunday obligation.] We welcome to Holy Communion all Orthodox and Catholic Christians, who are able to receive Holy Communion in their own parish Church. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, all should come forward to kiss the Holy Cross, or be anointed with blessed oil, and share in the Blessed Bread. Then join us in our small hall for our Coffee Social. THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!*



## Icon of our Lord Jesus Christ “Not-made-by-hands”

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The Icon of the Savior, **Image Not-Made-By-Hands**, also **Acheiropoieta** (Byzantine Greek: *αχειροποίητα*, "made without hand") is one of the earliest icons witnessed to by the Church.

The Feast of this icon is celebrated on August 16, during the Post-festive period of the feast of the Dormition, and is called the Third Feast-of-the-Savior in August.

### According to Tradition

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During the time of the earthly ministry of the Savior, Abgar, ruler in the Syrian city of Edessa, was afflicted with leprosy. Reports of the great miracles performed by the Lord extended throughout Syria (Matt. 4:24) and as far as Arabia at this time. Although not having seen the Lord, Abgar believed in him and wrote a letter requesting Christ to come and heal him. Abgar sent his court painter, Ananias, with this letter to Palestine telling him to paint an image of the Divine Teacher. Ananias was not able to go near Christ because of the great many people listening to his preaching. He attempted to produce an image of the Lord Jesus Christ from afar, but could not. The Lord called Ananias and promised to send his disciple in order to heal Abgar from the leprosy and instruct him in salvation. Then the Lord called for water and a towel. He wiped His face with the towel, and on it was His Divine Image.

The Savior sent the towel and a letter to Edessa back with Ananias. With thanksgiving Abgar received the sacred objects and started healing. He continued healing until the arrival of the disciple Thaddeus, Apostle of the 70. The Apostle preached the Gospel and baptized the Abgar and all living in Edessa.

Having written on the Image Not-Made-By-Hands the words, Christ-God, everyone trusting in Thee will not be put to shame, Abgar adorned it and placing it over gates of the city. For many years it was venerated by those who passed through the gates. Edessa, a great-grandson of Abgar, fell into idolatry and was



**Image Not-Made-By-Hands [page 2]** determined to remove the image. In a vision, the Lord ordered the Bishop of Edessa to conceal the image. The bishop and his clergy at night, blocked up the niche with clay tablets and bricks inclosing with it a lit lampada. Many years passed by and the inhabitants forgot about the Holy Object.

In the year 545, the Persian King Chroses I, besieged Edessa, and all seemed hopeless. But Bishop Eulavios was commanded by a vision of the Theotokos to get from the enclosed niche the image with which to save the city from the adversaries. Dismantling the niche, the Bishop found the Holy Image; before it burned the lampada and on the clay tablets, with which the niche had been enclosed, was a similar image. After preceding with the Cross and the Image Not-Made-By-Hands around the walls of the city, the Persian army miraculously departed. In 630, Edessa was seized by Arabs; but they did not hinder veneration of the Image Not-Made-By-Hands. In 944 the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (912-59) requested that the Image be brought to the Capital of the Orthodox. With great honor the Image of the Savior Not-Made-By-Hands was brought by the clergy to Constantinople. On August 16 the Image of the Savior was placed in the Pharos Church of the Most-Holy Theotokos.

There are several traditions concerning the fate of the Image Not-Made-By-Hands. One is that it was carried away by Crusaders during the time of their dominion over Constantinople (1204-61), but the ship on which Holy Objects had been taken, sank in the Sea of Marmora. Another is that the Image Not-Made-By-Hands was taken about 1362 to Genoa, where it was presented to and preserved in a monastery dedicated to the Apostle Bartholomew.

### **Other traditions**

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In the time of the iconoclastic heresy, the defenders of icon-veneration, shedding their blood for the Holy Icons, sang the Troparion to the Image Not-Made-By-Hands.

The Image (the Holy Face) was put up as an emblem of the Russian armies, defending them from the enemy; and in the Russian Orthodox Church there is a pious custom that before entering a church, the faithful read together the prayers and the Troparion to the Image Not-Made-By-Hands.