



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

August 6, 2011

THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy,

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Societies, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved,

On this day we celebrate the great and sacred Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us lift up our hearts and minds so that we can set our soul up to reach the higher things, leaving this mundane world, if for a moment, to contemplate the mystery before us. Let us be lifted up, in the radiant brilliance of Divine Light. At that time which the Father revealed to the Son, Jesus took the "inner circle of the Apostles –Peter, James, and John", high up into the mountain and revealed to them His Divine-Self. (Matthew 17: 1-2) Indeed His light shown forth, not as light exposed, when it is uncovered, rather the light pierced through the coverings, of flesh and clothing, which our Lord had condescended to take upon Himself. Together with the Transfigured Lord, both Moses and Elias appeared, affirming that the Christ was the God of both the Living and the Dead, (Rom. 14:8-9) the fulfillment of both the law and the prophets; not appearing as ghosts or conversing with Him as phantasms, but as friends and righteous servants of the Living God. That light which was witnessed by Peter, James, and John could not be contained by such coverings. That light witnessed to the light, indeed, Light from Light, True God of True God (Nicene Creed), not changing into something new or greater, but revealing, by means of Light, and announced by the Father, and the presence of the Moses and Elias, what He always was, is and will be, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

This brilliant Light which radiated forth from the Savior gave new power to their eyes, giving them spiritual sight to see things unknown. This is made clear in that the Holy Disciples recognized both Moses and Elias, though they had never seen them before. (Matt. 17:4) This new awareness which they possessed, this Divine Sight, though yet to be perfected, was a gift given to them for their participation in this glorious Transfiguration, now having become partakers of the Divine Light.

We too are invited to partake of this Light and the Transfigured life which Christ offers to those who adhere to Him and the life to which He calls every faithful man. (Eph. 5:8) Let us remember that we have been called out of the world, (John 15:18-19) that we are participants in the great mystery of salvation, and that we too are able to become Light-filled, according to the gift of adoption and inheritance, as sons and daughters of the Most High God. Today we learn that our Lord shines forth light by nature, for He is, in His nature, perfect in all respects; we shine forth light through the active participation in the sacramental life of the Orthodox Church – through the striving of our hearts and minds to be conformed to the measure of the stature of Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. 4:12)

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† E V A N G E L O S
Metropolitan of New Jersey