



St. Mary Magdala Spiritual Center is the ministry center of The Community of the Cross, an intentional community of Christians affiliated with the Orthodox-Catholic Church of America. ALL ARE WELCOME



St. Mary Magdala Spiritual Center

**FIRST SUNDAY**

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### Sunday Liturgy

10:00 AM

2800 Rolston Street  
Fort Wayne

All are Welcome!

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### Cross-Quarter Days and St. Thomas and the Dormition

With the beginning of August we celebrated Lammas - a harvest feast of grains. Later this month we'll celebrate the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God or the Feast of the Assumption as it is more popularly known in the West. The Eastern Church has always celebrated it as the "dormition" or going to sleep of the Blessed Mother or God-Bearer (Theotokos in Greek). There's not much difference in the story. The small icon on the top left of this page shows an iconographer's writing of the event. She falls asleep and Jesus is pictured taking her soul to heaven. All the apostles (except for St. Thomas) gather around her.

This is one story of how it happened: The Dormition of the Theotokos took place while Apostle Thomas was preaching the gospel in India. The other Apostles had been caught up from various lands on the clouds of heaven, and were transported to Gethsemane, to the bier of the all-blessed Virgin. This was permitted by the will of God, so the faithful might be assured that the Mother of God was bodily assumed into heaven. For just as they were more greatly assured of the Resurrection of Christ, through the disbelief of Thomas, so did they learned of the bodily assumption into heaven of the all-pure Virgin Mary through the delay of Thomas.

On the third day after the burial St. Thomas was suddenly caught up in a cloud in India and transported to a place in the air above the tomb of the Virgin. From that vantage point, he beheld the translation of her body into the heavens, and cried out to her, "Whither goest thou, O all-holy one?" She removed her girdle (belt) and gave it to him saying, "Receive this, my friend." And then she was gone.

He then descended to find the other disciples keeping watch over the sepulchre of the Theotokos. He sat down beside them, with the girdle in his hand, greatly saddened that he had not been there when she reposed, as had been the other Apostles. Hence, he said, "We are all disciples of the Master; we all preach the same thing; we are all servants of the one Lord, Jesus Christ. How, then, is it that ye were counted worthy to behold the repose of His Mother, and I was not? Am I not an Apostle? Can it be that God is not pleased with my preaching? I beseech you, my fellow disciples: open the tomb, that I also may look upon her remains, and embrace them, and bid her farewell!"

The Apostles took pity on St. Thomas and opened the tomb. All were aghast when they found it empty, not realizing that moments before she had been bodily transported to paradise to be the mediatrix of Christians. All that remained were her burial clothes, which emitted a wonderful unearthly fragrance.

I like the story and it's a way of teaching us all that we too will be raised up with Christ in the end. In a sense all of these feast days that we celebrate are to remind us that we are not just born for this world but that we are going somewhere else in the end and that the circle of life continues. The pagan feasts like Lammas and the other quarter and cross-quarter days teach us that the cycle of life and death goes on. We celebrate the moments of extreme (summer and winter solstice) and the moments of balance (spring and fall equinox) and life continues with the celebration of new births (imbolc) and fertility (Beltane), harvest (Lammas) and death (Samhain). At all times there's a sense of connectedness in these celebrations - connection with the earth, with the divine and with the community.

Let us keep that connection alive in our own community so that we can celebrate the whole circle of life, death and resurrection together.

+John

### **TIME FOR A COMMUNITY MEETING**

We hope it doesn't seem like it but we actually are an incorporated community, known officially as "The Community of the Cross" and as such we have to meet at least once a year to review our status, make plans, voice concerns, and elect officers.

Fr. Cliff is our president and Bishop John is the Treasurer. Sherry Camp is the Secretary and Anita Carter and Bill Hoot are members of the Board of the Community. Each year we have a general meeting of the Community and we are thinking perhaps this year it could be August 20 - that's coming up this month. We will discuss it and decide this Sunday.

### **REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Remember Faye in your prayers as she recovers from her surgery this past week and Bill Hoot as he prepares for his surgery this coming week. In addition, Marilyn Tobolski will also be undergoing surgery in September and needs lots of prayers as she prepares for this.

Pray for Beth and George, Bishop John and Pidge's daughter and her fiance as they get married on August 27. May they have many happy years together.

Remember all of the Church in your prayers, each of us is struggling with something. We all have challenges as we go on our journeys. Pray for those who are unemployed or under employed, for those who are lonely and alone.

Keep those who live in combat areas or dangerous parts of the world and our cities in mind as you pray. Pray most of all for justice - justice would prevent so much of the misery and problems that we face in our world and in our communities.

Pray for a sense of outrage at the violence, greed and waste in our world. Honor the earth, the waters and the sky and do what you can to stop pollution.

Pray for an end to genocide, apartheid and the displacement of people from their lands all over the globe. Let go of any form of racism, sexism, homophobia, agism and other forms of hatred and bigotry. Pray that we may all grow stronger to be able to witness to the true Gospel message, a message of good news that God is Love and we who love God love our neighbor - all else is failing.

### **CLERGY FOR AUGUST**

Aug 6	Cliff+
Aug 13	+John
Aug 20	+John
Aug 27	Cliff+
Sep 3	+John

