

Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate this blessed Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, “in radiant joy with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs together with the angels and the apostles,” we give thanks to God for the revelation of His abundant grace and glorious power through the life and witness of the Virgin Mary. In our commemoration of her and the holiness of her life and service, we are reminded of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, All things are possible to the one who believes. (Mark 9:23).

This assurance of Christ, that through faith the impossible becomes possible, that as people of God we can move beyond limitations to accomplish great and marvelous things in His name.

Today we can once again offer a witness of this truth. In our reflection on the life of the Theotokos, we know that she found favor with God, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and she conceived and carried in her womb the Son of God. She asked the angel following the annunciation of the Incarnation of Christ, How shall this be, since I have no husband? (Luke 1:34) How could this be accomplished by this holy and humble handmaiden of God? All things are possible to the one who believes.

On this Feast of the Dormition, we marvel at her repose and the witness that she offered in passing through death unto eternal life. We sing, “She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim, she who is held in greater honor than all creation...today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son.” How did this happen? How does she continue to offer intercessions on behalf of us all? How did she receive such an exalted place? All things are possible to the one who believes.

The potential of this promise through the power of faith and through the holy witness of the Theotokos offers us assurance and strength. The disciples of our Lord were encouraged and guided by her and her holiness of life. Her repose became a celebration of the abundant and eternal life that comes through faith in Christ. This Feast is one of hope and assurance, affirming that even through our burdens and challenges, even in the face of obstacles that seem insurmountable, even through physical hardships and spiritual struggles, all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ.

The power of faith and the unlimited possibilities before us for ministry and service should also be our focus.

May the blessings of the Lord be with you on this Feast of the Dormition, and may we seek the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos as we explore the boundless and unlimited potential of our faith in Christ.

With paternal love in Him,

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America