



THE MOST BLESSED THEOTOKOS*

Our Guide on the Path Towards Deification

THE ALL-VENERABLE Dormition and Translation to Heaven of our Most Blessed Lady *Theotokos* affords us the opportunity to explore in greater depth the mystery of the restoration of the human personality in Jesus Christ our Savior.

With the Incarnation of the Word “of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,” the true Man is revealed to us.

In the person of the God-Man we see the fulfillment of our own personality.

Christ is “the Imprint of the Archetypal Beauty,” “the unchangeable Image,” our prototypical and sinless Image.

In order to renew our personality, corrupted by sin and disintegrated, we must unite ourselves by Grace with the God-Man.

Faith, Holy Baptism, the practice of the holy evangelical virtues, and partaking of the Immaculate Mysteries mark out our blessed path towards deification. By means of these, the God-Man is Incarnated anew within us by Grace; we experience in our lives the great and immaculate mystery of our participation in the Divine life of the Holy

Trinity; we commune with our Creator; we discover our fullness; we attain our calling; we become “partakers of the Divine nature”!

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MARY THE *Theotokos* was the first to enjoy this great and most sublime gift in Christ, through the Church.

Our Savior, the God-Man, is unique. The *Panagia* is the first perfect human being after the God-Man; she is the first holy member of the Church; she is the first perfect and completely deified creation of Divine Grace; she is literally the First after the One.

The Most Blessed Mother of God is the author of “noetic renewal”; it is she who precedes mankind, while all the rest follow. She is the Guide on our path towards the much-desired healing in Christ of our deeply ailing personality; it is she who has the second place after the Trinity and helps us by her Grace, as the Mother of God, to rediscover the lost Paradise of delight—our communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; it is she “through whom we have been clad with” uncreated “glory,” and for this reason she is hymned and regarded as “the joy of all generations.”

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DELVING INTO these great Mysteries of our holy Faith, within the mystagogical atmosphere of worship and of the Mysteries of Orthodoxy, with especial feeling, compunction, and fervor, let us chant this well-known and blessed *Troparion* to our Guide, the *Theotokos*:

“I have thee as Mediatrix before the God Who loveth mankind; may He not censure my deeds before the Angels. I entreat thee, O Virgin, come swiftly unto mine aid.”



*Source: Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 237 (July-August 1990), pp. 193-194.