

THEOSIS WEEKEND REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

CITY _____
STATE AND ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

FAMILY STATUS:
MARRIED _____ SINGLE _____ CHILDREN _____
PARISH _____

OCCUPATION/OTHER INTERESTS

Please indicate the kind of activities you are currently involved with:

a) In your parish

b) In the wider community

PLEASE INDICATE ANY SPECIAL DIETARY OR OTHER NEEDS YOU HAVE WHICH WE SHOULD KNOW TO MAKE YOUR WEEKEND A COMFORTABLE ONE:

**The
Theosis
Weekend**



Hosted by:
Saint Basil the Great
Byzantine Catholic Church
1118 East Union Bower Road
Irving, Texas 75061
(972)438-5644
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and directed by:
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Melkite Catholic Priest
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**Grow in the image
and likeness of
Christ**



Saint Basil the Great Parish
July 24-26, 2009

**Theosis
Weekend**

THEOSIS

This program is a new approach to adult spiritual growth in our Church. Developed by the Eparchy's Office of Educational Services, this program focuses upon prayer and shared reflection on major elements in the Eastern Christian spiritual tradition.

Theosis is a Greek word meaning "deification" or "divinization." It refers to the life of God that we have been called to share. The Church Fathers saw it as the very reason for Christ's coming and thus the cornerstone of Christian spirituality: "God became man so that man could become divine." The idea of *Theosis* has remained at the heart of the Eastern Christian understanding of what life is all about.

WHY THIS PROGRAM?

Christ promised us a life full of adventure: "I came that they might have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). He came to energize us in a way that sets no limit to our potential by making us "sharers in the divine nature" (2 Pt 1:4). Through Christ and our baptismal union with Him, we can live the very life of God!

We experience this life in the Church through the Holy Mysteries. Yet we must, as individuals and communities, take hold of this life and allow it to be released in us. Often we find that we and our communities do not reflect the life of God in us as clearly as we might. We need to refocus and look again at what has been given to us.

Besides needing spiritual renewal, our community needs to reclaim our Eastern Christian spiritual heritage, which too often has been laid aside under the influence of Western Church practices. While we may experience excitement as evangelicals, cursillistas or even as Moonies, our call is to encounter the Lord authentically; within the framework of our own Church's timeless heritage.

Designed by clergy and laity in our diocese for our diocese, the *Theosis* program has the following goals:

1. To renew our parishes spiritually and help them grow as communities of people who experience the Lord's presence on a deep level;
2. To link together people of faith in parishes throughout our diocese in a common experience of our Eastern spiritual tradition.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

The *Theosis* Program helps us realize these goals in several ways:

- a) *A Weekend Retreat*, bringing together members of all our parishes in a particular area to start people on the program;
- b) *Ongoing study and support groups* back home in each parish to maintain the spiritual commitment of participants in a daily way;
- c) *Periodic regional Days of Prayer* to bring people back together for spiritual "booster shots;"
- d) *Regular Leadership Formation programs*, as well as ongoing contact among parish leaders in order to develop strong lay leaders.

THE WEEKEND RETREAT

At the *Theosis* Weekend participants glimpse the breadth of our Eastern Christian tradition on the life of God in us. We experience this through personal prayer, the Holy Mysteries, and other liturgical services. Talks focus on what the normal Christian life is intended to be according to our Tradition. We come to see ourselves as sharers in the divine life and members of the Church's royal priesthood, destined to be sharers in the very nature of God. As we share with members of other parishes, we come away invigorated by the support of brothers and sisters in our own Church.

THE ONGOING PARISH GROUP

The Weekend Retreat is not an end in itself: it is meant to lead to the formation of an ongoing parish group. In these groups, those who have gone through the *Theosis* will be able to deepen their understanding of our Eastern Christian spirituality and continue to experience the support of those who took part in the retreat with them.

WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW

The weekend is ordinarily conducted over a weekend at a local retreat house, beginning on Friday evening with registration starting at 7:00 p.m. The final service concludes on Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

The cost of the weekend varies, depending on many factors. You will be invited to contribute during the weekend; if you can afford the actual cost, we are grateful. But if you can't, contribute what you can afford. You are especially invited to contribute more if you can, in order to help other with less ample means. God provides: no one should feel unable to participate because of his or her financial situation.

PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS

"The talks exceeded my expectations. I felt very close to God at the end of the weekend."

-- Lawrence, MA

"It was very satisfying to encounter such a direct, profound and not the least bit watered-down religious exercise."

-- Waterford, CT

"I feel that I have been falling away in my spiritual life and prayer, and this has been a fantastic renewal."

-- Danbury, CT

"We shared in a beautiful experience that awakened in us a new realization, a desire, and a thirst for more."

-- W. Paterson, NJ

"I was called, and I answered...I was filled with a new understanding of what my Lord wants of me."

-- Central Falls, RI