**Nativity of the Theotokos**  
St. Joachim and St. Anna had lived a long time but had no children. They prayed and prayed, asking God for a child. Finally, their prayers were answered and they had a daughter who they named Mary. This feast celebrates the birth of the Mother of God and reminds us to trust God's plan.

**September 8**

**Elevation of the Holy Cross**

St. Helena, the mother of St. Constantine, wanted to find the true cross of Christ. When she found the cross she took it to the Bishop of Jerusalem, St. Macarius, who showed it to all of the people. In this icon, you can see St. Macarius displaying the cross and St. Helena on his right side.

**September 14**

**Presentation of the Theotokos**

God chose Mary to be the Mother of God. However, she needed to prepare. Her parents took her to the Temple to live and learn about God. In this icon, you see Mary being greeted at the Temple as a young girl. This feast celebrates this important day in the life of the Theotokos.

**November 21**

**Nativity of Christ**

Jesus Christ was born to Mary and Joseph in a cave in the town of Bethlehem. In the icon you can see the star that shone above where He was born. Shepherds heard angels proclaim His birth, and wise men came to honor him. All of creation rejoices in His birth.

**December 25**
January 6
Theophany celebrates the baptism of our Lord. Before Jesus started teaching, He first went to John the Baptist to be baptized in the Jordan River. As Jesus was being baptized, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove and the voice of the Father could be heard saying, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.” (Luke 3: 21-22)

February 2
This feast celebrates Jesus being presented at the Temple in Jerusalem. In the icon Jesus is held by St. Simeon who said, “Now, Master, let thy servant depart in peace; You have fulfilled Your word. For my eyes have witnessed Your saving deed, displayed for all peoples to see; A revealing Light to the Gentiles, the Glory of Your people, Israel.”

March 25
Mary was chosen by God to be the Mother of our Lord. God sent the Archangel Gabriel to Mary saying, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” (Luke 1:26-28) This feast celebrates the Virgin Mary’s acceptance of God’s will.

The Sunday before Pascha
After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Jesus entered Jerusalem fulfilling the prophecy that reads, “Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt.” The people there greeted him with palm branches crying out, “Hosanna in the highest!”
Pascha is the day we celebrate Christ’s resurrection from the dead. Jesus opened the gates of Hades and won victory over death. In this icon you can see Jesus raising Adam and Eve to be with Him in heaven. This Holy feast reminds us of God’s love for us and teaches us that all people have the chance to be with Him in Heaven.

Ascension

40 Days after Pascha
This Feast Day celebrates Christ’s ascension, or rising, into Heaven. “He was lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took Him from their sight.” (Acts 1:9) In this icon, you can see Christ going to Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. The apostles and the Theotokos are at His feet. Christ promised the apostles that He would not leave them; He would send the Holy Spirit to them.

Pentecost

50 Days after Pascha
While the Apostles were gathered together, the Holy Spirit descended upon them, as Jesus had promised. Tongues of fire came upon them and they were able to speak different languages and teach the world about Jesus Christ. This feast fulfills Christ’s promise to the apostles to send the Holy Spirit.

Transfiguration

August 6
Christ took Peter, James and John to the mountain, where He showed them that He was God. “He was transfigured before their eyes. His face became dazzling as the sun, His clothes as radiant as light.” (Matthew 17:2) In this icon, Jesus stands with Moses on His left and the Prophet Elias on His right, while the three apostles are at His feet.
August 15
At the feast of the Dormition we remember the death of the Theotokos, the mother of Jesus. In the icon you see the Theotokos surrounded by the Apostles, and Jesus taking her to be with Him in Heaven.