

Wonder Worker

APRIL 2024

CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Christy Chappell Belkin
- Philoptochos President: Maria Molzahn
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

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THE RADIANT TRIUMPH

Pascha, the celebration of Christ's glorious Resurrection, stands as the crown jewel of the Orthodox liturgical year. Far more than just an Easter Sunday celebration, it's a culmination, a joyous eruption of light after a period of introspection and spiritual preparation. This article delves into the rich tapestry of traditions, practices, and profound significance of Pascha within the Orthodox faith.

A Journey of Preparation

The 40 days of Great Lent leading up to Pascha serve as a pilgrimage inward, a time for repentance, fasting, and prayer. Orthodox Christians embark on a journey of self-discovery, confronting their shortcomings and seeking reconciliation with God and others. This period of preparation culminates in Holy Week, a week charged with anticipation and heightened spiritual intensity.

Holy Week: A Drama Unfolding

Each day of Holy Week holds profound significance, transporting participants through the final moments of Christ's earthly ministry. Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, while Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday recount the events leading to his betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

Great and Holy Friday: A Day of Mourning

Great and Holy Friday is a day of profound mourning. Churches are adorned in black, symbolizing grief. The veneration of the Holy Cross, the instrument of Christ's suffering and sacrifice, takes center stage. It's a day of somber reflection, a time to contemplate the gravity of Christ's sacrifice and the immense love it embodies.

The Glorious Vigil: Anticipation and Light

As the sun sets on Great and Holy Friday, a dramatic shift unfolds. The Paschal Vigil, a service commencing late on Saturday night and extending into the early hours of Sunday morning, marks a turning point. The church, initially shrouded in darkness, gradually comes alive with the flickering light of candles. Prayers of anticipation build, culminating in the joyous proclamation of "Christ is Risen!"

The Feast of Feasts: A Celebration of Life

Pascha Sunday erupts in a joyous celebration. Churches are adorned in white and gold, symbolizing the radiant light of Christ's Resurrection. Warm embraces are exchanged, echoing the greeting "Christ is Risen!" – "Truly He is Risen!" Festive hymns fill the air, and a communal meal of fellowship breaks the Lenten fast. The atmosphere is one of pure joy, a celebration of life's ultimate triumph over death.

Beyond the Celebration: A Renewed Life

The joy of Pascha extends beyond the celebratory feast. The "Bright Week" following Pascha is a continuation of the celebration, a time for visiting loved ones and sharing the Paschal message of hope and renewal. The lessons learned and the spiritual transfor-

Continued on top back page

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	Strict Fast Day	Strict Fast Day 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education Class 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class via Zoom	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. 3rd Salutation Service	Fast Day (Wine & Oil allowed) Ethiopian Mission
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Special Procession of the Holy Cross Sunday School Creek School 4:00 p.m. Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers—Saint Ignatius	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline		Strict Fast Day 11:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education Class 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	Strict Fast Day 6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class via Zoom	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. 4th Salutation Service	Fast Day (Wine & Oil allowed) Russian Mission
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Sunday of Saint John Climacus 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Creek School	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	Strict Fast Day No Religious Ed Class 6:00 p.m. Small Compline with Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Women's Spiritual Meeting via Zoom	Strict Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Akathist Service	Fast Day (Wine & Oil allowed) 8:00 a.m. Parish Clean up and Polishing Religious Items. All parishion- ers are invited to join us and help prepare our parish for Holy Week Ethiopian Mission
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Creek School	Strict Fast Day	Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Philoctetes Chapter Meeting via Zoom	Strict Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	Strict Fast Day	Strict Fast Day	Fast Day (Wine & Oil allowed) Saturday of Lazarus 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropol- itan Nathanael Sunday School Len- ten Retreat & Confession
28	29	30				
Fast Day (Fish, wine & oil allowed) Palm Sunday 8:30 a.m. Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Creek School 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service	Strict Fast Day Holy Monday 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service	Strict Fast Day Holy Tuesday 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service				

The Parish Council Update

March 2024

Officers: Christy Chappell Belkin; President, Bill Margetis, Vice President; Bruce Hansen, Secretary; Scott Storck, Treasurer; Niko Papadopoulos, Assistant Treasurer
Members: Conn Choles, Nick Helser, Bill Margetis, Maria Molzahn, Mike Smith, Jim Katsiitis, Telly Fatsis

Next General Assembly is Sunday, April 14

We will gather for our Spring General Assembly to approve the church budget on April 14 after Liturgy in the social hall.

All-Church Cleaning Day on Saturday, April 20 at 9 AM!

Our all-church cleaning day will be Saturday, April 20 to help prepare the church for Holy Week and Pascha services. If you are able to come out on Saturday 4/20 even if it's just for a couple of hours, it would help a great deal to speed up the cleaning and lighten the load. We will be doing tasks like cleaning the inside of the church, polishing the pews, preparing for the floral decorations, etc. Please join us at the church by 9 AM Saturday (although we would welcome any time you can give!). We'll have the coffee on and will provide snacks.

Palm Sunday Plaki Meal, April 28

Once again we will host the traditional Palm Sunday fish dinner after Divine Liturgy on Palm Sunday. The price is \$15/per plate for adults and \$10 for children 10 and under. Sign up online and reserve your dinners by April 21 at <https://bit.ly/Plaki24>

Pascha Anastasi Lamb Dinner, May 5 after Holy Saturday Midnight Service

All are invited to come celebrate the Lord's resurrection together by sharing in the Anastasi Mea! Please plan to join us if you can! If you RSVP by April 28, the price will be \$20/per plate for adults and \$15 for children 10 and under. Limited quantities will be available at the door for \$25/\$20 per plate respectively. Sign up online by April 28 at https://bit.ly/AGOC_Lamb

Greek Fest+ 2024 Update - Mark your Calendars & Volunteer (September 7 & 8)

Maria Molzahn and Christy Belkin will be co-chairing Greek Fest+ this year and we're looking forward to putting on another great event for our church and the Madison community! Thank you to all of you who have already stepped up to lead and volunteer for our festival. It's a joy to do this with you all.

Greek Fest Hours:

Saturday, Sept 7 from 12 PM to 7 PM

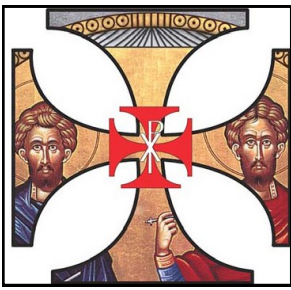
Sunday, Sept 8 from 11 AM to 6 PM

Next Parish Council Meeting April 16

The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16th at 7:00PM. The Parish Council typically meets on the third Tuesday of the month.

On behalf of the Parish Council,

Christy Chappell Belkin
President



FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS

Philoptochos Forward

Philoptochos Forward -- April News

On our path to Pascha and Holy Resurrection we often wonder how we prepare ourselves both as individuals and organizations. According to our Archdiocese during Lent we are more conscious of our spiritual character. As an organization focused on philanthropy and promoting the philanthropic purposes of our church, one of the ways we can prepare ourselves is by carefully analyzing our giving to ensure that we are fulfilling this mission. Towards this end, we are taking a deep look at our mission in relation to our local giving. Our goal with this project is to ascertain if the charities we support align to the stated Philoptochos:

- To help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fundraising efforts.

This is not a futile task, on average, along with our National and Metropolis level obligations, our Philoptochos supports our greater Madison and Dane County. Last year, close to \$7,000.00 went to support the River Food Pantry, Porchlight, the Goodman Center, Village Diaper Bank, the Madison School District, and numerous church related needs. Ensuring that we are contributing to causes that align with our mission is critical to our long term sustainability. We would like to give you the opportunity to share the non-profit causes that you would like us to consider supporting. Please take a moment to email Cynthia Van Buskirk at CindyVB52@gmail.com and give us your ideas for organizations that we may want to consider.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make the March 25, Greek Independence Day Dinner a resounding success. Father Christodoulos inspirational words were a wonderful segway into the beautiful Greek School presentation commemorating the day. It was wonderful to come together with each other and share the delicious plaki meal. Thank you to all! Together we raised close to \$4,000.00 for the needy of Greece and Cyprus.

This month we will focus on helping our community get ready for our most important ecclesiastical holiday, Pascha. Once again, we will be offering parishioners the opportunity to purchase tsourekhi bread. An email flier will be going out soon. As a Philoptochos we will be dyeing the eggs and making the koulourakia for our Anastasi meal and shut-in baskets. Thank you to everyone who has stepped up to help with these tasks. We are also waiting to hear more about our upcoming visit from our Metropolitan Nathanael on 4/27.

Again thank you all for your continued support for our Philoptochos. If you haven't, please do fill out the membership form. The deadline is quickly approaching and we need everyone if we are to stay vibrant!

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, 4/23, at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

And our end of year celebration will be on May 30th.

As always, I can be reached at mariaandpatrick@gmail.com . Much love to all!

Maria Molzahn



The Ladies' Philoptochos Society Assumption Greek Orthodox Church Membership Drive

We invite you to join us and share in our philanthropic mission. Through your stewardships and our various fundraisers, we can donate to many worthy causes helping people in need locally, nationally, and internationally. Locally we donate our resources and Philoptochos power to several organizations on a regular basis, and to special hardship situations as needs are presented to us. Nationally and internationally we support the philanthropic programs of our Metropolis Philoptochos and our National Philoptochos.

We need you to join us in this most important mission. If you haven't already updated your Philoptochos membership, please do so now. While the minimum requirement for membership is \$22.00, all those proceeds go to support our National and Metropolis levels with their projects. Any money donated beyond the \$22.00 will go to our local Philanthropy Fund activities and other chapter obligations.

We hope that you will join us as a member and as a volunteer. Whether you attend regular meetings, volunteer to help with our activities, or would like to support our work with your stewardship, you will be a valued Philoptochos member. We look forward to hearing from you.

Please complete the form below and submit it with your 2023 stewardship payment, by February 28, 2023. Checks should be made payable to "Philoptochos" and please write *membership* in the memo section. The mailing address is below. Thank you!

NAME	
ADDRESS	
PHONE	
EMAIL	

I am interested in helping with the following project(s) and please include me!

Vasilopita Luncheon (January)		Baklava Plus Sale (Sept. – Nov.)	
Mid – Winter Luncheon (February)		Maintaining the Church Hall/Kitchen	
Greek Independence Day Dinner		Cooking for Homeless Shelter	
Koulourakia baking (Holy Week)		Baking Breads for Special Dinners	
Spring/Easter bake sale		Coffee Hour Hostess	
Greek Fest Bake Sale (drive by pick up or onsite)		Prosforon (Holy Bread) baking	
Reception for Assumption Feast Aug 14		Bucket Brigade (church cleaning)	
Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, and/or Memorial Services (if requested)		Operation Classroom	

My Stewardship payment of \$_____ is enclosed (check #_____).

Please note: \$15.00 goes to National Philoptochos, \$5.00 to the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos, and \$2.00 to the Bishop's Fund. We ask for a minimum pledge of \$22.00.

*Please return to Beth Fatsis (1215 E Johnson St, Madison, WI 53703)
or drop it in the Philoptochos mailbox at Church.*

Thank you for your generous time and support!

YOUTH CORNER



Hope you are all having a great lenten season. As Pascha is coming around the corner, we want to encourage you all to bring your children to church to participate in the church services and sacraments leading up to Pascha. These moments are the most beautiful times to come together to prepare ourselves and our children for the death and resurrection of Christ.

On Saturday April 27th, we will have our third Lazarus Retreat, starting at 11:00am-1:30pm. There will be liturgy that day, orthos starting at 8:30am and liturgy starting at 9:30am.

After liturgy, in the church hall:

- There will be fun games and activities that go along with Lazarus Saturday.
- Families will help make palm crosses for Palm Sunday.
- Children will also participate in the sacrament of confession. Father Christodoulos will begin confession with the younger children (K-1st grade) in a big group, then 2nd-high school students individually.
- There will be a potluck, so families please bring with you a lenten dish to share after liturgy.

During the time of the retreat the church will have their annual church cleaning. Adults and children are welcomed to help as they wait for their turn for confession. Cleaning the church is a beautiful way to come together as a family to help make our church clean and ready for Paschal!

On Sunday April 28th and Sunday May 5th there will be no Sunday school for Palm Sunday and Easter.

In Christ,
Susu Akkawi

COMMUNITY NEWS

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Will be held on Tuesday, April 16th, at 7:00 p.m.

PHILOPTOCHOS CHAPTER MEETING: Will be held on Sunday, March 17th, following Liturgy.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASS: A.R.E. classes have begun. We are currently reading the Gospel of John soon. Classes are on Wednesday's at 11:00 a.m. for in person classes and On Thursday's at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join us.

WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL MEETING: Women's spiritual zoom meetings will be on Thursday, April 18th at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in participating and you haven't signed in yet please contact Peli Galiti at pegaliti@gmail.com You will get the zoom link in your email.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLANNING: As we begin this new year, please consider making a Planned Gift to the Church. A Planned Gift is an opportunity to leave a legacy that strengthens the Church and supports its vital ministries and will leave an impact that will be felt for years to come. It may also give you substantial current tax benefits as well as estate tax benefits. If you are interested in finding out more about the many ways that the Church can be included in your will or estate planning, please contact a Parish Council Member.

NEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DRIVE: As a community we have always tried and succeeded in taking care of and upgrading our Sanctuary and facilities. We the spirit of continuously improving our church. We are beginning a long term Capital Improvement Fund Drive. We are looking at 3 particular future projects. These are the Broken Sewer pipe in our back parking lot, Replacing and upgrading our current church sound system and remodeling our kitchen. The months ahead we will be formally setting up a Capital Improvement Fund Drive Committee who will spearhead the entire process. We ask everyone to consider this in future giving, funeral memorials and in planned giving. If you are interested in giving a donation for the Capital Fund please put "Capital Improvement Fund Drive" on the memo line of the check or mark it on the envelope. Together we can get these projects finished.

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED: Dear members and parents. If you or your children would be interested in serving in the Altar please come see me. We are need on children and men of all ages to help bolster our Altar server ranks especially during Lent, Holy Week & Pascha. Children should be 8 and up.

HOLY CONFESSION IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF LENT: Each of us should go to the priest for Holy Confession during this period of Advent. Our very salvation can be threatened when we ignore this most beautiful sacrament of our Church. Make time year to call your Father Confessor for an appointment.

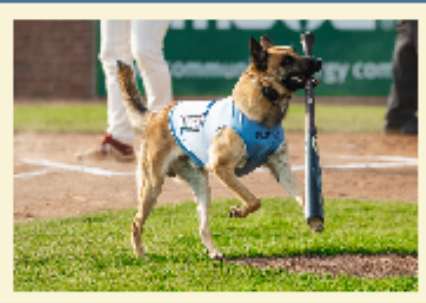
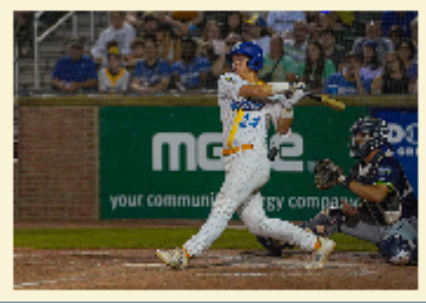
CHURCH CLEANING FOR PASCHA: As we do every year in preparation for Holy Week & Pascha we will be asking all parishioners to come join us on Saturday, April 20th beginning at 10:00 a.m. to help us clean the church and polish our Holy items. This is a bit earlier then usual as we will have His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael joining us on the Saturday of Lazarus. Come help us beautify our church.

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON: On Sunday, April 28th our Parish Council is hosting our Annual Palm Sunday Luncheon. We will have a traditional Palm Sunday Meal of baked fish with sides, a salad and fresh bread. Dessert will also be provided. The Cost of the meal is \$15. Please R.S.V.P. after liturgies or by clicking the link <https://forms.gle/smrP7PM1AQuxWP8c7>. Please reserve by Sunday April 21st, 2023.

ANASTASI MEAL FOLLOWING RESURRECTION SERVICE: All are invited to join us for an Anastasi Lamb Dinner, Immediately following Thr Holy Resurrection Divine Liturgy on Pascha. In the Assumption Community Center Downstairs. Cost will be \$20 for Adults & \$15 for Children 10 & Under. Please R.S.V.P by Sunday, April 28th, by Clicking Link. I Hope to see many of you joining us on Pascha Night. <https://forms.gle/Xb7S3Begd8ok4krAA>

PHILOPTOCHOS TSOURAKI SALE: Greek Easter Bread, Order by Sunday, April 21, 2024. The cost is \$12 per bread and you can order at link below. All orders can be picked up between Friday, May 3rd through Sunday, May 5th.

<https://checkout.square.site/merchant/5NSRFAV9F19T2/checkout/JAFMKA2LXU5UVNGIISXJBQLQ>



SAVE THE DATE

**Tuesday,
July 30th**

GATES OPEN: 5:05 PM

FIRST PITCH: 6:05 PM

**Assumption Greek
Orthodox Church
at the Duck Pond!**

More Details To Follow!

FANARI LENTEN RETREAT

Saturday, April 13, 2023

2:00-8:00 PM



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Fanari Camp is excited to continue our Metropolis-wide Fanari Lenten Retreat. The retreat will be a day in the life of camp, and will include: Worship, Orthodox Life, games, Song Night, and much more!
All 5th-12th graders are invited to join us!

This retreat is regional, and will have eight satellite locations throughout the Metropolis.

St. Mary's, Minneapolis, MN

Annunciation, Milwaukee, WI

Ascension of Our Lord, Lincolnshire, IL

St. Haralambos, Niles, IL

SS. Constantine & Helen, Palos Hills, IL

SS. Constantine & Helen, Merrillville, IL

St. Nicholas Family Life Center, St. Louis, MO



PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON



**On Sunday, April 28th our Parish Council is hosting our
Annual Palm Sunday Luncheon**

**We will have a traditional Palm Sunday Meal of baked fish
with sides a salad and fresh bread. Dessert will also be provided.**

The Cost of the meal is \$15

Reservations are strongly encouraged but not required.

<https://forms.gle/smrP7PM1AQuxWP8c7>

PALM SUNDAY

ALL ARE INVITED TO JOIN US
FOR AN
ANASTASI LAMB DINNER
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE DIVINE
LITURGY WHICH FOLLOWS THE HOLY
RESURRECTION SERVICE
IN THE
ASSUMPTION COMMUNITY CENTER
COST IS
\$20 For Adult \$15 for children 10 & under
Please R.S.V.P by Sunday, April 28th

By Clicking Link Below

<https://forms.gle/Xb7S3Begd8ok4krAA>





Order Form for Greek Easter Breads (Tsourekia)

The price is \$12 for each 1-pound Round Bread

Orders are due by Sunday, April 21



Your Name _____

Email Address and/or Phone Number _____

Number of Breads Ordered _____ X \$12 = \$ _____

Payment Options:

- 1) The link below will take you to our secure payment processor for Credit/Debit Card Payments.

[Click here to pay electronically](#)

- 2) You can mail your order form with a check (made out to *Philoptochos with Easter Bread* in the memo section) to the Philoptochos Treasurer.

Beth Fatsis
1215 E. Johnson St
Madison WI 53703

- 3) You can put your order form and your payment of cash or a check (made out to *Philoptochos with Easter Bread* in the memo section) in an envelope and place the envelope in the Philoptochos philanthropy basket in the church's exo-narthex.

All Easter Breads (Tsourekia) ordered can be picked up from Holy Friday (May 3) through Easter (May 5).

Your order will be labeled with your name, and it will be placed on a table near the choir practice area in the church's lower-level fellowship hall.

Please email Maria Papas Heide at maria.heide@wisc.edu or call her at (608) 772-5545 with any questions.

**CHURCH CALENDAR /ΩΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΙΕΡΩΝ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΩΝ
HOLY WEEK/PASCHA**

**ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΣΧΑ
2024**

SATURDAY OF LAZARUS/ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΛΑΖΑΡΟΥ
April 27th, 2024

9:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael/ Ὁρθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία

PALM SUNDAY/ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΒΑΙΩΝ
April 28th, 2024

8:30 a.m. Orthros/ Ὁρθρος

9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy/ Θεία Λειτουργία

6:00 p.m. Service of the Bridegroom/ Ακολουθία του Νυμφίου

GREAT AND HOLY MONDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ
April 29th, 2024

6:00 p.m. Service of the Bridegroom/ Ακολουθία του Νυμφίου

GREAT AND HOLY TUESDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΤΡΙΤΗ
April 30th, 2024

6:00 p.m. Service of the Bridegroom/Ακολουθία του Νυμφίου

GREAT AND HOLY WEDNESDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ
May 1st, 2024

3:00 p.m. Sacrament of Holy Unction/ Ακολουθία του Αγίου Ευχέλαιου

6:00 p.m. Orthros of Holy Thursday and Anointing with Holy Unction/
Ὁρθρος της Μεγάλης Πέμπτης

GREAT AND HOLY THURSDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΠΕΜΠΤΗ
May 2nd, 2024

9:00 a.m. Vespers Divine Liturgy/ Εσπερινή Θεία Λειτουργία

6:00 p.m. The Passion of our Lord and the Reading of the 12 Gospels/
Ακολουθία των Φρικτών Παθών του Κυρίου

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ
May 3rd, 2024

8:00 a.m. Royal Hours/ Ακολουθία τις Μεγάλης Ὁρας

2:30 p.m. Apokathelosis/ Αποκαθλώσις του Κυρίου

6:30 p.m. Lamentations Service/ Ακολουθία Τά Ἐγκώμια

GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY/ΜΕΓΑΛΟ ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ
May 4th, 2024

9:00 a.m. Vespers Divine Liturgy/ Εσπερινή Θεία Λειτουργία
11:00 p.m. Holy Resurrection Canon/

Τά Προκαταρκτικά Μεσονυκτικού της Αναστάσεως
Followed by Resurrection Service and Divine Liturgy/
Ὁρθρος της Αναστάσεως και Θεία Λειτουργία

HOLY AND GREAT PASCHA/ ΑΙΩΝ ΠΑΣΧΑ
May 5th, 2024

10:00 a.m. Agape Vespers/ Μέγας Εσπερινός της Αγάπης

**BRIGHT MONDAY GREAT MARTYR GEORGE THE
TROPHYBEARER**
Monday, May 6th, 2024

Monday, May 6th, 2024

8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy/

Ὁρθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία at Saint Iakovos Retreat Center

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA/SUNDAY OF THOMAS
Sunday, May 12th, 2024

Sunday, May 12th, 2024

8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at 9:45 a.m.

Ὁρθρος και Θεία Λειτουργία

Holy Week Meditation and Study Guide

Fr. Andrew J. Demotses

The services of Holy Week transform us into eyewitnesses and direct participants in the awesome events of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In readings taken from both Old and New Testaments, in hymns, processions, and liturgical commemoration, we see the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, and the mighty acts by which God Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ, grants us forgiveness for our sins, and rescues us from the pain of eternal death.

Palm Sunday Evening

Matthew 21:18-43.

This evening's service calls to mind the beginning of Jesus' suffering. The gospel describes the plotting of the priests and elders to trap Jesus into convicting Himself as a religious heretic. Through parables, Jesus tells us of His coming betrayal, trial, conviction and execution by crucifixion. The hymns of this service commemorate two things: the first, the prophetic figure of Joseph, who, while virtuous, nonetheless suffered unjustly at the hands of his brothers before being greatly rewarded, and the second, the parable of the fig tree, which in failing to bear fruit, became a symbol of fallen creation, and of our own lives, in which we also have failed to bear spiritual fruit.

Holy Monday Evening

Matthew 22:15-46; 23:1-39.

This evening's theme is the need for watchfulness and preparation, lest we be called unprepared before the awesome judgement seat of Christ to render an account of ourselves. The gospel reading contrasts the efforts of the Pharisees to trick and discredit Jesus, with the forceful resistance which Christ mounts against their evil. The hymns remind us of the parable of the Ten Virgins, in which the faithful Christian is exhorted to vigilance.

Holy Tuesday Evening

John 12:17-50.

The need for true repentance is the concern of Tuesday evening's service. This transformation from the life of sin to a life of faith and obedience is exemplified for us in the person of the sinful woman who received the gift for forgiveness when she anointed Jesus with myrrh and washed His feet. The highlight of the service is the hymn written in honor of this woman by St. Kassiani. The Gospel meditation foretells of the coming suffering of Christ and recalls His inner struggles and agony.

Holy Wednesday Afternoon and Evening

Epistle readings: James 5:10-16, Romans 15:1-7, I Corinthians 12:27-31-13:1-8, II Corinthians 1:8-11, Galatians 5:22-6:2, I Thessalonians 5:14-23. Gospel readings: Luke 10:25-37, Luke 19:1-10, Matthew 10:1 & 10:5-8, Matthew 8:14-23, Matthew 25:1-13, Matthew 15:21-28, and Matthew 9:9-13.

The primary theme of Holy Wednesday is our human need for the healing and forgiveness that comes into our lives when we establish a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are reminded that the way to this relationship is to be found, above all else, through the life of prayer. In the Sacrament of Holy Unction, the faithful are anointed and thus, healed both physically

and spiritually. They are also reconciled to God and one another so that they might receive the gift of the Holy Eucharist instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

Holy Thursday Morning

Matthew 26:2-20, John 13:3-17, Matthew 26:21-39, Luke 22:43-45, and Matthew 26:40-27:2.

On Holy Thursday morning, we ascend Mt. Zion with Christ and the Twelve, and enter into the upper room. Once there, we witness the awesome moment when, at the Last Supper, Christ abolishes the ritual practice of the Old Covenant and establishes the ritual of the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah, through the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The faithful receive Holy Communion at that Holiest of Liturgies.

Holy Thursday Evening

In this service, we commemorate the undeserved suffering of Jesus Christ, endured for our sake, so that we might be reconciled anew to God our Father. The Gospel readings witness for us the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, his trial and conviction, and finally his torture, crucifixion and death at the hands of a sinful humanity. This evening's service also includes the procession representing Christ carrying His own cross along the Via Dolorosa, and ends when we see before us the King of Glory crucified. The Gospels are as follows:

1. John 13:31-18:1
2. John 18:1-29
3. Matthew 26:57-75
4. John 18:28-19:16
5. Matthew 27:3-32
6. Mark 15:16-32
7. Matthew 27:33-54
8. 23:32-49
9. John 19:25-37
10. Mark 15:43-47
11. John 19:38-42

Matthew 27:62-66

Holy Friday Afternoon

I Corinthians 1:18-2:2, Matthew 27:1-38, Luke 23:39-43, Matthew 27:39-54, John 19:31-37, and Matthew 27:55-61.

In this service, we are once again reverent witnesses to the undeserved suffering of Christ, to his terrible passion and death. What is remembered in a special way through liturgical commemoration and procession, is the faithfulness and love of Joseph of Arimathea who tenderly removed Christ's body from the cross, wrapped it in clean linen, and carried it to his own unused tomb

for burial.

Holy Friday Evening

- Ezekiel 37:1-14, I Corinthians 5:6-8, Galatians 3:13-14, Matthew 27:62-66. On Good Friday evening, the theme is Christ's descent into Hades during which the Gospel of repentance and reconciliation with God is shared with those who died before Christ's saving dispensation in the flesh. The service begins with lamentations sung as we stand before the tomb of Christ commemorating His unjust punishment and the shedding of His innocent blood. But the service ends on a note of joy and hope, with the reading of the Prophet Ezekiel in which he describes his vision of our resurrection yet to come; in the midst of despair, we are told there is hope, for not even death can separate us from the unfailing love and power of God. Death is about to be conquered and faithfulness rewarded.

Holy Saturday Morning

Romans 6:3-11, Matthew 28:1-20.

On Holy Saturday morning we celebrate the theme of faithfulness receiving its reward. The crucifixion is over, Christ is buried, the twelve apostles and other disciples are scattered and defeated. And yet, three myrrh-bearing women come in faithfulness to perform the last act of love--to anoint Jesus according to the Jewish burial custom. Their unwavering devotion is rewarded--they are the first to share in Christ's triumph over evil and death. They are the first witnesses to the Resurrection. This joy is commemorated through the scattering of bay leaves and rose petals by the priest.

Holy Saturday Evening and Easter Sunday Morning

Mark 16:1-8.

The lamentations of the previous night are repeated and the church is plunged into darkness to symbolize the despair and defeat experienced before the dawn of Christ's victory over the Enemy of our salvation. Precisely at midnight, a single light emerges from the altar representing the victory of Christ over death, the defeat of the Prince of Darkness by Jesus, the Light of the World. As the light is passed from person to person, it pushes back the darkness of the church and defeats it completely. The Resurrection is proclaimed in song and triumphant procession, and after the Liturgy, its light is carried into our homes so that they too might be filled with its light and warmth and triumph.

Easter Sunday Morning

John 20:19-25.

Christ's Resurrection and victory is affirmed in this morning's theme. The Gospel is read in several languages to illustrate the universality of the Good News of the Resurrection and its proclamation to the very ends of the earth. Love, forgiveness, reconciliation, triumph and joy--these are the gifts which we receive because Christ lived and died and triumphed for our sake.

GLORY BE TO HIM FOR ALL THINGS, AND MAY YOUR EASTER BE BLESSED



April 22—Renewal Tuesday: The Commemoration of Saints Raphael, Nicholas, Irene, and the Other Newly-revealed Martyrs of Lesbos. Orthros begins at 9:00 a.m.

On the island of Mytilene (Lesbos in ancient times), near the village of Therme, the villagers had a custom of ascending a certain hill on this day to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in the ruins of a small chapel, although no

one knew whence the tradition sprang. In the year 1959, certain villagers began seeing persons who spoke to them, first in dreams, then awake, both by day and by night. Through these wondrous appearances, which were given to many people independently, the holy Martyrs Raphael, Archimandrite of the ancient monastery, and Nicholas, his deacon, together with other Saints who had been martyred on the island, told the villagers the whole account of their martyrdom, which had taken place at the hands of the Moslem Turks ten years after the fall of Constantinople, in 1463. The twelve-year-old Irene had been tortured, then burned alive in a large earthenware jar in the presence of her parents. On Tuesday of Renewal Week, Saint Raphael had been tied to a tree and his head sawn off through his jaws; Saint Nicholas had died at the sight of this. Although the feast is celebrated today because it is the day of their martyrdom, through the appearances of the Saints as living persons five hundred years after their martyrdom, it is also a singular testimony to the Resurrection of Christ.

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

On Lesbos, ye strove in contest for the sake of Christ God; ye also have hallowed her with the discovery of your relics, O blessed ones. O God-bearer Raphael, with thee, we all honour Nicholas the deacon and Irene the chaste virgin, as our divine protectors, who now intercede with the Lord.

Kontakion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

Ye shone on the world like stars first as ascetics, then as athletes slain for Christ, and were translated to the heights through the great torments that ye endured; and them that praise you, ye keep and protect, O Saints.

mation experienced during Great Lent are meant to be carried forward, shaping everyday life and guiding individuals on their ongoing spiritual journey.

Symbolism and Traditions

Orthodox Pascha is adorned with rich symbolism and cherished traditions. The Paschal egg, a symbol of new life emerging from death, is exchanged as a joyous reminder of Christ's Resurrection. The Paschal candle, representing the light of Christ conquering darkness, illuminates the church during the vigil service. The traditional Paschal bread, often adorned with a cross, is shared during the celebratory feast. These traditions serve as tangible reminders of the profound spiritual message of Pascha.

A Celebration for All

Pascha transcends ethnicity and cultural boundaries. Orthodox communities worldwide celebrate the Resurrection with similar fervor, each region adding its own unique traditions and customs to the tapestry of the feast.

Orthodox Pascha stands as a testament to the enduring power of hope and the transformative power of faith. It's a celebration that transcends the boundaries of time and culture, offering a message of hope and renewal that resonates across generations. The journey of preparation, the somber reflection of Holy Week, and the joyous eruption of Pascha Sunday paint a powerful picture of faith, sacrifice, and the ultimate triumph of life over death.

+*Very Rev. Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos*

The Entrance of Our Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem Sunday before Pascha

"Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!"

+ Christ is blessing with His right hand.

+ In His left hand is a scroll, symbolizing that He fulfills the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah Who has come to redeem us from our sins and break the power of death.

+ Just as the bridegroom comes for the wedding not with authority and power, so Christ comes to man, with humility and Great Love.

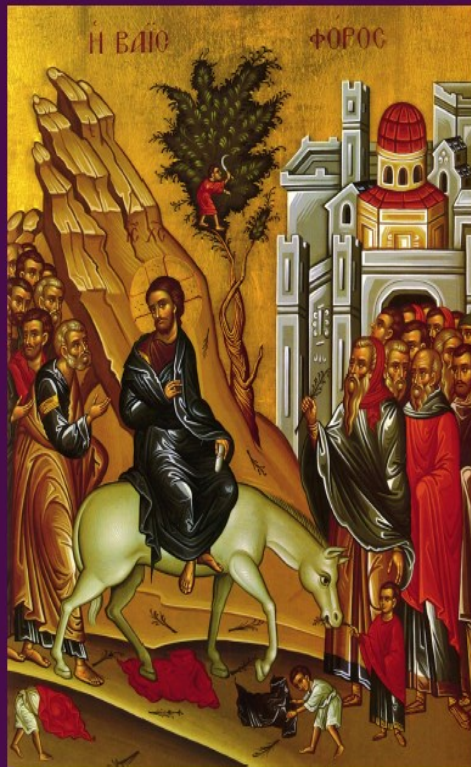


+ Holy Tradition says that children climbed trees to cut down palm branches.

+ They greet Him, waving the palm branches as a gesture of love.

+ St. Cyril of Alexandria points out that children sang "hosanna" while their fathers shouted "let Him be crucified." Children threw their garments down for Christ to pass, while their fathers divided Christ's garments.

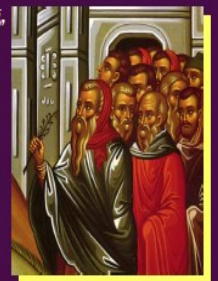
+ St. Paul calls us to be childlike, with pure hearts, rejecting evil thoughts.



+ The Jews greet Him crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!"

+ The word "Hosanna" means "Save, I pray" or "Save now."

+ Chief priests and scribes were especially angry at hearing this praise.



+ Christ is seated upon a donkey's colt as He enters Jerusalem: a fulfillment of prophecy (Zechariah 9:9).

+ This lowly form of transportation is chosen by Christ with humility. Christ is meek and lowly in heart, as He calls us to be.

+ The colt was considered unclean according to the Law.

+ It symbolizes the inclusion of all peoples of all nations in the New Covenant to come through the death and Resurrection of Christ (Isaiah 6, 2:10-11).

