

"THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER" *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

O Holy John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, pray to God for us!

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2688 California Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15212
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (*Talk or Text*) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

Great Lent 2022: We have reached Holy Week. The Great Fast is over, but this week is a *higher* more intense fasting period. Make this week spiritually meaningful by coming to the services and increasing your fasting.



A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Glory to Jesus Christ! (*responded with: Glory forever!*)
Slava Isusu Christu! (*Slava na viki!*) We are happy that you have joined us today! It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God's Blessings to all who visit with us today and hope you stop again soon! Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, APRIL 17 #PALM(FLOWERY)SUNDAY
FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM
Venerable Joseph the Hymnographer (883)
Blessing of Branches (Palms and Willows)

+++

GREAT AND HOLY PASSION WEEK

MONDAY, APRIL 18 #HOLY WEEK

6:00 pm Bridegroom Matins and confessions

TUESDAY, APRIL 19 #HOLY WEEK

6:00 pm Bridegroom Matins and confessions

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20 #HOLY WEEK

6:00 pm Mystery (*Sacrament*) of the Anointing of the Sick (*Unction*)

*** *Final opportunity for Confession til after Pascha*



THURSDAY, APRIL 21 #HOLY WEEK

9:30 am St. Basil's Vespertal Liturgy of the Mystical Supper (*Institution of the Eucharist*)

6:00 pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels

FRIDAY, APRIL 22 #HOLY WEEK

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30am Royal Hours (*followed by setting up the Tomb*)

6:00 pm Vespers & Burial Service with the Procession of the Holy Shroud (Plašcanitsa)

SATURDAY, APRIL 23 #HOLY WEEK

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Vespertal Liturgy of St. Basil (*Harrowing of Hades*)

+++

SUNDAY, APRIL 24 #PASCHA

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

9:00 am Resurrection Matins

~9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Baskets (*upstairs in the church*)

Liturgical Color: **White**

Paschal Potluck Meal

BRIGHT WEEK: A FAST FREE WEEK

MONDAY, APRIL 25 #BRIGHT WEEK

9:30am Paschal Liturgy with Gospel Procession

TUESDAY, APRIL 26 #BRIGHT WEEK

7:00 pm Akathist to the Holy Resurrection of Christ

THURSDAY, APRIL 28 #BRIGHT WEEK

7:00 pm Paschal Vespers

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 #BRIGHT WEEK

9:30am Paschal Divine Liturgy

FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY

APRIL 17th

GREAT WEEK BEGINS



GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

APRIL 22nd



FEAST OF FEASTS!

APRIL 24th

NO FASTING!



+++

Calendar - Future Services are updated online at:

www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar

(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

+++

Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:

www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/

+++ +++ +

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

+++ +++ +



To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website at:

www.acrod.org/prayercorner/lentenresources/

+++ +++ +

Behold The Bridgroom Cometh! - Bridegroom Matins is a service specific to the first four evenings of Holy Week (though it is often omitted on Holy Wednesday in favor of the service of Holy Unction) and commemorates the last days in the earthly life of the Lord. Incorporated into these services is the theme of the first three days of Holy Week; which is the last teachings of Christ to his disciples. As such, these services incorporate readings and hymns inspiring this theme. The mood of the services is to experience sorrow and to feel Christ's voluntary submission to His passions and highlight the purpose behind the evil

GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Epistle:

Philippians 4: 4-9

Gospel:

John 12: 1-18

Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE

Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.

BRIGHT WEEK

HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: Jan 1:1-17

Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

that is about to take place against the Lord. The atmosphere is one of mourning (for sins) and is symbolic of the shame the Christian should feel for the Fall of Adam and Eve, the depths of hell, the lost Paradise and the absence of God. The vestments of the Priest and the altar clothes are deep purple (or black) to symbolize and enhance the atmosphere of mourning and remembrance of sins. The main emphasis of the Bridegroom Service is metanoia and each service has its own particular theme on repentance and watchfulness. One of its primary features is its tropar:

Behold, the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night, and blessed is the servant He shall find vigilant; but unworthy is he whom he shall find neglectful. Beware therefore, O my soul, lest you be weighed down by sleep, lest you be given over to death and be closed out from the kingdom; but rise up crying out: "Holy! Holy! Holy are You our God; through the intercessions of the Theotokos, have mercy on us."

During the first service, the priest carries the icon of Christ the Bridegroom into the church. The Bridegroom tropar is sung during this procession, and the icon is brought to the front of the church and remains there until Holy Thursday. The icon depicts Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church, bearing the marks of his suffering, yet preparing the way for a marriage feast in his Kingdom. He is dressed in the icon according to the mockery of the Roman guards just prior to his crucifixion.

+++ +++ +

* **Pot-Luck Paschal Meal** – Our community meal following Liturgy on Pascha will return this year. All families are encouraged to bring something to share.

+++ +++ +

Blessing of Baskets – We will bless our baskets upstairs in the Nave of the Church. When you bring your basket Sunday morning, place it at the end of a pew near the center aisle or on the ground in the center aisle next to a pew. Remember that the “traditional” basket contains the foods that the church guides us to have fasted from. Feel free to include something that you fasted from during the Great Fast.

+++ +++ +++

THIS BULLETIN IS OFFERED

in memory of +Ann Hudak
(35-year anniversary).
May she be remembered in God’s Memory
forever! Eternal Memory!

+++ +++ +++

* **Blessing of Graves** – Our annual grave blessings at the cemeteries needs to be rescheduled. Please see Fr. Dave to help pick a date.

+++ +++ +++

** **Panachida Offerings** – Reminder: Panachidas (Memorial Services for the Departed) *cannot* be served on the Major Feast Days of our Lord including Palm Sunday, Holy Pascha, as well as on St. Thomas Sunday.

+++ +++ +++

Mystery Of Confession - Confessions will be heard in the first pew in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every* service, from **11am – 1pm** on **Saturday** (*the side door will be open*), and at other times by appointment (please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this). If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, please let Fr. Dave know. Confessions will only be heard through Holy Wednesday.

+++ +++ +++

Bulletin Sponsor – If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or In Memory of someone, please do so by signing up on the sheet in the church hall or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.

+++ +++ +++

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 166
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 97
Envelope Stewardship	\$ 422
Parish House Offering:	\$ 250
Total Collections:	\$ 935
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 35
Relocation Fund:	\$ 50

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Melanie Shuster; Mirilovich Family; Kathy Schrmack; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavilonis.

+++ +++ +++

On-Line Giving is available from our parish website to donate to the: *General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund.* The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2nd best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it’s ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

+++ +++ +++

* **Bowling Tournament** - This year's Metropolitan, Orestes Memorial Bowling Tournament, which will take place on Memorial Day Weekend, **May 27-30**, is a collaboration between Camp Nazareth and Saint John’s parish in Hermitage. (Events throughout the weekend will take place in Hermitage and Mercer, PA; and nearby Brookfield, OH.) It should be noted that deadlines for all paperwork and reservations is **APRIL 26**. It will be the first of a kind to be hosted in part by Camp Nazareth. You do not have to be members of the ACRY to participate. If you have any questions, please contact the Bowling Tournament Committee at acrybowling2022@gmail.com. Additional information can also be found at: www.acrod.org/organizations/senioracry/acryn-e/acrycomingevents/bt-2022 **If you are interested in bowling, please contact Subdeacon Ryan Ferko or Lynn Mainolfi.**

+++ +++ +++

Additional Material can be found in “The Voice” monthly newsletter on the first Sunday of the month as well as the article on the cover of this bulletin.

+++ +++ +++

VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioocese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

+++ +++ +++

SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. ⁶ Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

+++ +++ +++

Gospel: John 12:1-18

Mary Anoints Jesus

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Laz’arus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Laz’arus was one of those at table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, ⁵ “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii [a day’s wage] and given to the poor?” ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a

thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. ⁷ Jesus said, “Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

⁹ When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Laz’arus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to put Laz’arus also to death, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

¹² The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” ¹⁴ And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written,

¹⁵ “Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on an ass’s colt!”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. ¹⁷ The crowd that had been with him when he called Laz’arus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. ¹⁸ The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

THE HOLY MARTYRESS Pherbutha And Her Sister And Servants

Commemorated on April 17/4

The Holy Martyress Pherbutha and her Sister and Servants accepted a martyr's death for Christ between the years 341 and 343. Saint Pherbutha and her sister, whose name is unknown, were sisters by birth of the Seleucia bishop Simeon, who suffered for Christ under the Persian emperor Sapor between the years 341-344. Both sisters and their servants had been brought to the court by the empress to attend her. Saint Pherbutha was distinguished by her extraordinary beauty, and the empress suggested to her to enter into marriage to gain high position. The saint refused, since she had given a

vow of virginity in total service to God. Soon the empress fell ill. The sorcerers, which they brought in to treat the empress, saw Saint Pherbutha and were struck by her extraordinary beauty. One of them turned to her with a proposal, that she become his wife. The saint answered him, that she was a Christian and had given a vow to remain a bride of Christ.

The offended sorcerer reported to the emperor, that the reason for the sickness of the empress was poison, given her by servants. By order of the emperor Saint Pherbutha, and her sister and servants were brought to trial.

At the trial the holy martyresses fearlessly declared, that they were Christians and they would not do the wickedness of which they were accused, and that they were prepared to accept death for Christ.

The chief judge, the sorcerer Mauphis, was captivated by the beauty of the holy virgin Pherbutha, and he secretly sent to her his servant into the prison with an offer to free her and her companions, if only the maiden would consent to become his wife. The two other judges made similar offers to the holy virgin, secretly one after the other.

Saint Pherbutha resolutely refused all these offers, saying that she was a bride of Christ and could never consent to an earthly marriage.

After this, the martyresses were found guilty of being Christians and of working magic in the poisoning of the empress, and they were sentenced to death by execution. They tied each of them to two pillars and sawed them in half. The bodies of the holy martyresses were thrown into a ditch, from which Christians secretly retrieved them and gave them burial.

PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Kelly, Rose, Michelle, Paul, Kathleen, John, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, and Roberta ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*

+++ +++ +++

For the souls of the newly departed... +Andrew M. Halapin (4/14) ...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory.*

Spiritual Vitamin:
“Inasmuch as our contemplation of the cross increases, so deepens our communion and knowledge of the Lord Jesus.”

Metropolitan Saba

+++ +++ +++



+++ +++ +++

PRAYER CORNER CONTINUED

*Our Parish Prayer List for
Special Intentions and Other Needs**

+++ +++ +++

A Prayer For The Sick:

O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant **name(s)**. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver **him/her/them** from sickness and bitter pain. Heal **him/her/them** so that **he/she/they** may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

+++ +++ +++

For the Special Intentions of... His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr.

David S., Fr. Myron, Dcn. Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Amee, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians:*

Nicholas, Dylan, Thomas, Samuel, Timothy, Nicholas, Aydin, Subdeacon Seamus, Nicholas, *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Lawrence, Matthew, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Mary Jane, Katherine,

Kenneth, John, Wendy, Margaret, John, Patricia, John, Todd *and for those who labor towards our Community Outreaches ...through the prayers of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker; St. John the Baptist; the Archangels Michael & Gabriel; and the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.*

+++ +++ +++

For our Catechumens & Inquirers... Susan, Marilynn, John ...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

+++ +++ +++

For those preparing for Marriage... Justin & Erica, Francis & Alexandra, Nicole & Dustin ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

+++ +++ +++

For Pregnant Mothers... Allison (*due in May*), Stacey (*June*), Sammy (*June*) , Caitlin (*September*), Mallory (*September*) ...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

+++ +++ +++

For those serving in the Armed Forces & Civil Authorities... Thomas R. Dzadovsky and Trevor Meegan ...*through the prayers of St George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

+++ +++ +++

* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters in Christ and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (*in the case of answered prayers*) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another**. Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. *This prayer list is **NOT** limited to only Orthodox Christians.*

+++ +++ +++

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS
OF THE GREAT FAST

A Prayer for Peace
Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

+++ +++ +++

A Prayer Of Repentance (Psalm 50/51)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy; And according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my iniquity, And my sin is continually before me. Against You only have I sinned, And done this evil before You. That You might be justified in Your words, And prevail when You judge. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, And in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, And take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And with Your governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Your ways, And the ungodly shall turn back to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, who are the God of my salvation, My tongue shall rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; With whole burnt offerings You shall not be pleased. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, A heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion; And let the walls of Jerusalem be built Then shall You be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings; Then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

A prayer for our Neighborhoods

by Archbishop Demetrios of America

I pray to you, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life's problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or do not know. O Lord, remind the people of our area that You exist, that You are a strong and loving Protector. Keep away, Lord, anything that causes the disappearance of peace from souls, and the escape of sleep from our eyes. Stay a little while more tonight in our neighborhood. Spread peace along with the night. Let the harshness of the day and its struggles not spread over the night. Amen.

+++ +++ +++

A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Bishop *(name)*, and our spiritual father *(name)*, and all our diocesan clergy, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God Who loves us and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving- Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

+++ +++ +++



THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM

THE SYRIAN

(in the Ruthenian tradition as found in St. Peter Mogila's 1639 Liturgikon (Sluzhebnik))

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + *[Prostration]*

But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love.

+ *[Prostration]*

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen.

+ *[Prostration]*

The following triplet is recited 4 times (making a total of 12 bows):

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *[bow]*

O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. *[bow]*

O Lord, forgive me, for my sins are many. *[bow]*

Then the prayer again with only one prostration:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen. + *[Prostration]*

+++ +++ +++

The Jesus Prayer

(Inhale) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
(Exhale) have mercy on me, a sinner!

(Repeat until your heart is calm...)

+++ +++ +++

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:00pm or by appointment.

+++

Online Community: Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.

Parish Phone Tree - Please call Fr. Dave to be added.

Emergency Sick Calls – Please notify Fr Dave when you or a family member are going into the hospital or having a procedure. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

Mystery of Confession – Opportunities are available after every service, most Saturdays during fasting periods from 11am to 1pm, OR by appointment.

Holy Communion/Eucharist – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged for all Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, with fasting from midnight on, regular Confession, and forgiveness for all people. Those who are not Orthodox may receive a *blessing* from the chalice.

Lapsed Members – You are always welcome home and we want you back! Generally speaking, sincere participation in the Mysteries of Confession, Communion, and regular attendance at the divine services are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.

Baptisms – Two God-parents are required, at least one of whom must be Orthodox by faith (and the other a practicing Christian). In the case of infants, the newly-baptized must have one name that is Christian in origin. Parents/grandparents/guardians must also promise to bring the child up in an Orthodox Christian way of life. Please consult Fr. Dave for more details.

Adult Chrismation – New parishioners are always welcome! In the case of adults seeking entrance into the Church, a period of prescribed catechism will be established with Fr. Dave before administration of the Mysteries. An Orthodox Christian sponsor is also required.

Marriages – are only solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Fr.

Dave ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall).
Church Funerals – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual responsibilities and their stewardship. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

+++
“The cremation of bodies is not a Christian act. It is a custom of modern times. The body of a Christian has been sanctified with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and as such may not be burned. God did not create our bodies for burning.” - Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica
+++ +++ +++

MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

OCMC - This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC)**. This is the organization that puts out the Coin Boxes that we have been using through the Great Fast. Please bring in your coin boxes on Pascha. (There will also be an additional offering requested on our regular last Sunday of the month.) “Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Tim 6:18)
+++ +++ +++

VIRTUAL BULLETIN BONUSES



WALKING WITH CHRIST IN
THE SERVICES OF HOLY WEEK:
*An Invitation to Journey with Christ in
His Church*

It has often been said of the Orthodox Church that Orthodox believers reckon their lives “from Pascha to Pascha.” The 3-day journey of Pascha constitutes the defining moment not just of our church year, but also of our very lives as the Lord’s disciples. The invitation that goes out to each of us in these all-revered days of Holy Week and Pascha is not offered so that we would be *mere spectators*. No, the promise of Holy Week is given to us so that we might be *true participants* at the Lord’s side, with the disciples, and with the godly women at the Tomb. May this guide help you and your family to maximize what you are able to attend, so that you, too, might be witnesses of Him and His Glorious Resurrection when on May 2nd we proclaim: *Christ is risen!*

+++
The Feast of the Entrance of our Lord
The Sunday **Divine Liturgy** commemorates the Great Feast of the Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. The Feast of Palms, paired gloriously with Lazarus Saturday, offers us a triumphal foretaste of Christ’s Passion and Resurrection; yet, also signals the sad truth that many who at first hail Jesus as Lord turn from His teaching and forsake Him.

+++
Holy Monday
* **Bridegroom Matins:** In this service we are challenged to ponder the coming of the Lord and our lack of preparation to meet Him. The liturgical texts refer chiefly to the parable of the Ten Virgins, which forms the general theme of the first three days of the week.

+++
Holy Tuesday
* **Bridegroom Matins:** The theme shifts dramatically to the person of Judas at the Last Supper, who is sharing the Lord’s Table, and yet is preparing to betray Him. We also commemorate the woman that was a sinner, who anointed Christ’s feet as He sat in the house of Simon. The repentance of the sinful harlot is contrasted with the tragic fall of the chosen disciple.

+++
Holy Wednesday
* **Holy Mystery of the Anointing of the Sick (Unction):** This Mystery (Sacrament) of the Church provides both physical and spiritual healing with holy oil blessed by the Holy Spirit. Holy unction is a mystery of great comfort to the faithful. It provides uplifting and asks for patience to accept the will of God, whatever the physical outcome.

+++
Holy Thursday
* **Vespertal Liturgy of the Mystical Supper:** At this time, we commemorate the Last Supper and enter into the eternal mystery of it, which is the Eucharist. The reserve Sacrament that is kept in the Tabernacle is prepared at this service.
* **Matins of the Passion (12 Gospels):** We prepare for Holy & Great Friday hearing the Passion Gospels and encountering Christ Crucified. This is one of the most powerful services in all of Orthodox Holy Week.

+++
Holy & Good Friday (*a day of strict fasting*)
* **Royal Hours:** We revisit the Cross. We hear the hymns of the previous evening and find Jesus hanging on the Cross for our salvation. (*If you cannot be at the Thursday evening service, know that this service of the Royal Hours covers much of the same content.*) Royal Hours offers a powerful meditation on the Cross and its meaning.
* **Vespers & Procession with the Holy Shroud (Pláčanita):** During this service we remember the taking down of the Lord’s body from the Cross and His entombment by the Noble Joseph. The burial procession around the inside of the church is done with everyone holding candles. This is a beautiful and moving service for all to participate in!



+++
Holy Saturday (*a day of strict fasting*)
Vespertal Liturgy: This ushers in the first message of the joyous feast. This service is the Vespers of Pascha itself and announces what is to come. The vestments

are dramatically changed from black to white, and we hear “Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.” On Holy Saturday we strict fast and make preparations all day for Pascha (including the preparation of sumptuous paschal foods).

+++
Holy Pascha!
* **Resurrection Matins:** Now we gather again to be ready to meet the Risen Lord. But before we make our triumphal Paschal Procession, quietly, the Lord’s body (Holy Shroud) is taken from the “Tomb” and placed in victory on the Holy Altar Table. All lights in the church are put out and we wait patiently for the first strains of the Paschal song, “Thy Resurrection, O Christ our Savior...” The paschal light is lit, the priest begins to chant the hymn and the light is passed from person to person and we exit the church and make our Paschal Procession (*to the Vestibule*). We now enter completely into the joy of Pascha. Christ bursts the gates of death and the gates of Paradise are opened. Coming back into the church, we celebrate the Resurrection Matins.

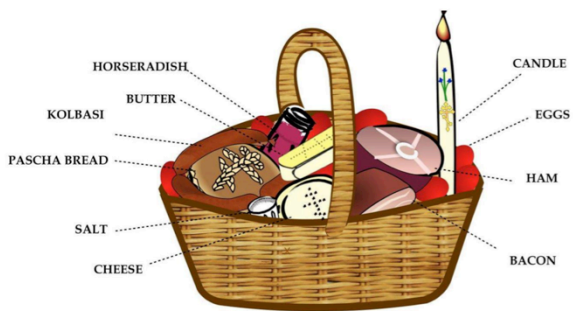
* **Paschal Divine Liturgy:** The morning matins service flows directly into the Divine Liturgy. Certain hymns are replaced with “Christ is risen” as we celebrate Our Lord’s Resurrection.
* **The Blessing of Baskets:**
After Liturgy, the priest will bless the Artos Bread and the Paschal baskets of food (up and down the center aisle).

+++
Bright Monday
* **Paschal Liturgy with Gospel Procession:** After the Liturgy is just about complete, another procession takes place where the Gospel Good News is read on the four sides of the church. In the brightness of the Resurrection, there is no fasting this week.
+++ +++ +++

Friday’s Spiritual Vitamin:
“We should accept every affliction without argument, with the thought of the wise thief that we receive these sorrows justly for our sins, for the cleansing and salvation of our souls.
With this attitude every sorrow takes on the quality of sorrow for the Lord’s sake and our personal cross is transformed into the Cross of Christ, and through it we find salvation.”
+Abbot Nikon Vorobiev

+++ +++ +++
Bridegroom Matins of Holy Week
By Fr. Michael Gillis
Sunday Evening
Tonight we pray the first of three Bridegroom Matins. For Holy Week all of the services are done half a day earlier than normal out of heightened anticipation (*for example, on Sunday evening we are praying the service for Monday morning*). The main hymn of Bridegroom Matins is a reflection based on Matthew 24:42, “**Watch therefore for you know not the hour when the Lord will come,**” and Matthew 25:6,
“**At midnight the cry was made, ‘behold the Bridegroom comes.’**”
Behold the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night; and blessed is the servant whom He shall find vigilant; and unworthy is he whom he shall find heedless. Beware, therefore, O my soul that you not be overcome by sleep, lest you be given up to death and be shut out of the Kingdom. Wherefore, rouse yourself crying out: Holy, Holy, Holy are you our God, through the intercessions of the Theotokos save us.
This hymn, sung three times in a row at each Bridegroom Matins service, reminds us that **each of us must remain vigilant in our relationship with God**. Sleep represents the attitude of not caring, of not anticipating or longing for the awareness of God’s presence in our life. This hymn specifically, and all of Holy Week generally, reminds us that just as the same crowd that shouted ‘Hosannah’ this morning will five days later be shouting ‘Crucify Him,’ so we too, if we are not vigilant and attentive to our souls, we too can fall away and miss the coming of God in our lives.

Each Bridegroom Matins service has different themes focusing on various aspects of the last week of Christ’s ministry.
These are sombre themes, but they are meant to be sombre. **We are going with Christ to the Cross**. But even so, the shouts of Hosannah are still ringing in our ears from this morning and the anticipation of the resurrection is beginning to glow dimly in our hearts.
+++ +++ +++



Assembling A Traditional Easter Basket
One begins with a straw basket filling with foods each holding symbolic significance:
1. Easter Bread (Pascha)
A sweet yeast bread rich in eggs and butter, symbolic of Christ “the Living Bread”. Usually a round loaf with a golden crust and decorated with a braid and cross. Pascha comes from the word Pasch, meaning Passover. In English we use it to refer to the Easter season. In Slavonic the word paska is used to refer to Christ “the new lamb”.
2. Cheese (Rusyn: Hrudka or Sirec)
A special cheese made from egg and milk shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. It is often decorated with cloves in the form of a cross.
3. Ham (Šunka)
The meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolism of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer lamb or veal.
4. Sausage (Kolbasi)
A spicy pork product flavored with garlic, indicative of God’s favor and generosity.

5. Butter (Maslo)
This favorite dairy product is often shaped into a lamb or small cross. Symbolic of Christ the lamb who was offered upon the altar of the Cross for the life of the world.
6. Bacon (Slanina)
Uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the overabundance of God’s mercy to us.
7. Salt (Sol)
Symbolizes the Truth of the message of Christ. Just as salt preserves food, so the teaching of Christ preserves our eternal life.
8. Horseradish (Chrin)
Horseradish mixed with grated red beets. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bittersweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.
9. Decorated Eggs (Pysanky)
Hard boiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and markings made with beeswax. Eggs were always considered as symbols of the resurrection, the emergence of new life.
*** *We are not limited to only having these items in our basket (nor do we have to have all of them). We fast for 40 days and a tradition is to bring what you have fasted from to the church to bless it before having some again (i.e. chocolate, or gum, or pop, or beer, etc.)*
+++ +++ +++
SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):
We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time...
PRAYER:
✘ Attend as many of the services as possible and be strengthened in community prayer.
✘ Come to the Mystery of Confession (*offered after every service, on most Saturdays during the Great Fast, or by appointment*).
✘ Approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible.
✘ Also, add additional prayers to your personal *Prayer Rule* at home. (See the attached about reading the Book of Psalms during Great Lent.)
FASTING:

✘ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, March 8. This is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, strict fast on Great & Holy Friday (4/22) and Great & Holy Saturday (4/23)
✘ The tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) by all of the faithful for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
✘ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:
○ a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
○ b) fast only from meat;
○ c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
○ d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week (*April 18-23*).
✘ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
✘ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular “midnight Fast” is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
✘ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time.
✘ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician’s instructions.
✘ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a “40 day diet program” or simply a “dietary adjustment” (or “label Lent”).
ALMSGIVING:
✘ Find a way to give more of your time, talent, and treasures.
A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:
Try to do more than last year.
Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one! – *Fr. Dave*

+++ +++ +++

How one can miss the point of fasting:



+++ +++ +++

FASTING SUGGESTIONS:

(source unknown)

FAST from self-concern and
FEAST on compassion for others.

FAST from discouragement and
FEAST on hope.

FAST from lethargy and
FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion and
FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken and
FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow and
FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip and
FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm you and
FEAST on prayer that sustains.

FAST from criticism and
FEAST on praise.

FAST from self-pity and
FEAST on joy.

FAST from ill-temper and
FEAST on peace.

FAST from resentment and
FEAST on contentment.

FAST from jealousy and
FEAST on love.

FAST from pride and
FEAST on humility.

FAST from selfishness and
FEAST on service.

+++ +++ +++

ORTHODOX ETIQUETTE

How and When to Make the Sign of the Cross
The Cross is perhaps the most well-known symbol