

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday

SUNDAY, April 9, 2017



- Troparion of the Feast, Tone One:

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou hast confirmed the universal resurrection, O Christ God. Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of death: Hosanna in the Highest, blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

- Second Troparion, Tone Four:

When we were buried with Thee, in baptism, O Christ God, we were made worthy of eternal life by Thy Resurrection. Now we praise Thee and sing: Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

- Kontakion of the Feast, Tone Six:

Seated upon Thy throne in heaven, and on earth upon a foal, O Christ our God, Thou hast accepted the praise of the angels and the songs of the children who cried out to Thee: Blessed art Thou that comest to call back Adam.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

- Sat., April 8:
 - 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy for *Lazarus Saturday*, Children's Choir singing responses
 - Pancake breakfast in the Hall**
 - Afternoon work party: cleaning of church inside and out—*see Fr. Lawrence*
 - 5 PM, Vigil for Palm Sunday with blessing of Palms (Confessions after the Gospel)
- Sun., April 9:
 - 10 AM, Divine Liturgy and Procession
 - Noon, Agape Meal
 - 1 PM, Procession Rehearsal for Pascha, in St. Seraphim
- Holy Mon., April 10:
 - 6:30 AM, Bridegroom Matins, Confessions after Matins
 - 5 PM, Confessions
 - 6:15 PM, Presanctified Liturgy
- Holy Tues., April 11:
 - 6:30 AM, Bridegroom Matins, Confessions after Matins
 - Confessions by appointment from Noon–3 PM
 - 5 PM, Confessions
 - 6:15 PM, Presanctified Liturgy
- Holy Wed., April 12:
 - same as Holy Tuesday, last day for Confessions
- Holy Thurs., April 13:
 - 11:30 AM, Vespertal Liturgy of the Mystical Supper ~ institution of the Holy Eucharist
 - 7 PM, Matins of Holy Friday ~ Reading of Twelve Passion gospels

- Holy Fri., April 14: Great & Holy Friday: Strict Fast Day
9 AM, Royal Hours (First and Ninth)
3 PM, Great Vespers with bringing out of Shroud
7 PM, Matins of Holy Sat., Lamentations & Procession ~ Reading of Psalms
- Holy Sat., April 15: Strict Fast Day
1 PM, Vespers Liturgy of St Basil, blessing of bread and wine
5 PM, Reading Book of Acts
11:30 PM, Nocturn Service
Midnight: PASCHA—Paschal Procession, Matins, Liturgy
Agape Meal in Hall to follow (bring your Pascha basket)
- PASCHA, April 16: 1 PM, Agape Vespers, Potluck BBQ
- Bright Mon., April 17: 9 AM, Paschal Matins and Liturgy, Archbishop Benjamin will award Archpriest Michael with the mitre during the Liturgy. Meal to follow
- Bright Tues. April 18: 6 PM, Paschal Vespers (*Liturgy has been cancelled*)

- BRIDEGROOM MATINS, 6:30 AM, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday:

“Behold, the Bridegroom cometh at midnight and blessed is he whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find heedless. Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be weighed down with sleep, lest you be given up and shut out from the Kingdom. But, rouse yourself crying: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O God. Through the Theotokos, have mercy on us.” (Hymn of Mon–Wed.)

“The form of this world is passing away...” (I Corinthians 7:31) *Pascha* means passover, passage. The Feast of Passover was for the Jews the annual commemoration of their whole history as salvation, and of salvation as passage from the slavery of Egypt into freedom, from exile into the promised land. It was also the anticipation of the ultimate passage—into the Kingdom of God. And Christ was the fulfillment of Pascha. He performed the ultimate passage: from death into life, from this “old world” into the new world, into the new time of the Kingdom. And he opened the possibility of this passage to us. Living in “this world” we can already be “not of this world,” i.e., be free from slavery to death and sin, partakers of the “world to come.” But for this we must also perform our own passage, we must condemn the old Adam in us, we must put on Christ in the baptismal death and have our true life hidden in God with Christ, in the “world to come...” And thus Easter is not an annual commemoration—solemn and beautiful—of a past event. It is this Event itself shown, given to us, as always efficient, always revealing our world, our time, our life as being at their End, and announcing the Beginning of the new life... And the function of the three first days of the Holy Week is precisely to challenge us with this ultimate meaning of Pascha... — *Father Alexander Schmemmann*

• CONFESSIONS

Keep in mind that **Confessions will not be heard after Holy Wednesday.** — *Fr. Lawrence*

• SIGN UPS FOR HOLY WEEK:

Your participation is requested and appreciated. We need help in the following areas:

- Readers for the Psalms and Book of Acts on Friday and Saturday, respectively
- Set up and clean up on Holy Saturday for the meal after Liturgy
- Cleaning the Church on Pascha morning (about 11 AM). It takes more than two.
- Set-up and clean-up for the Pascha BBQ

• BRIGHT MONDAY, April 17:

His Eminence Vladyka Benjamin plans to be with us on Bright Monday for the Paschal Matins and Liturgy. During the Divine Liturgy, at the Entrance with the Gospel, His Eminence will award Fr. Michael the mitre, an

award only revived last week by the Holy Synod. Father Michael will be the first priest in almost fifty years to be given the mitre. We also rejoice with Fr. John Schettig, who will be awarded the Palitza (which is the triangle-like vestment that hangs on the right leg. We also congratulate our Deacon Nicholas Carr, who has been blessed to wear the double-orarion. Axios.

- MATINS OF HOLY FRIDAY—Thursday evening at 7 PM:

On Great and Holy Thursday evening at 7 PM we serve the Matins of Holy Friday. This magnificent and *essential* service of Great and Holy Thursday, unlike any other service in the entire year, immerses us in the mystery of the Cross and our salvation. During that service we stand before the icon of our crucified Lord—which will be placed in the center of the Church—and hear the Gospel accounts of the Savior’s Passion—His suffering. We will be present with Him to hear His last teaching to His disciples. We will hear His sorrowful prayer of obedience to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, His betrayal by Judas, His Apostle Peter’s denial, the unjust judgment, the crown of thorns and the mocking of Him Who loves mankind. During those Gospel accounts, we will be present as He is nailed upon the Cross; we hear Him speak to the Wise Thief; we will hear Him say “into Thy Hands I commit my spirit” as He “gives over the Spirit.” He says: “It is finished,” having fulfilled the prophecies and perfected His work of salvation. Who does not weep as we hear of Joseph of Arimathea begging Pontius Pilate to take down the Life Giving Body of the Lord from the Cross?

Through all those readings and hymns, we are invited to understand our Savior’s suffering and in that depth of understanding, also to enter into the joy of His Resurrection. This Matins of Holy Friday (again, served on Thursday evening) is often referred to as the “Service of the Twelve Gospels,” since the Passion story is given to us in twelve different selections from the Gospel. Twelve times we will hear the choir sing the Gospel introduction: “Glory to Thy Passion, O Lord” and at the conclusion: “Glory to Thy long-suffering, O Lord.” Between the Gospel readings we will hear the choir singing hymns which comment on the frightful events of that day.

If you have never attended this “Service of the Twelve Gospels,” you will want to take note that only the first Gospel takes about twenty minutes to read (John 13:31–18–1). The other eleven are brief, yet powerful. Why is this first so long? These are the words our Lord spoke to His disciples on the eve of His death, His final instructions, and final prayer to the Father. We place ourselves before Him and let His Divine voice speak in our hearts through the reading. We must settle two things in our minds as we attend this Service: first, we are not spectators, but participants in the events. Secondly, we need time, not just a few minutes, to be immersed in our Lord’s incredible self-emptying, suffering love for mankind and in His own sorrow. So, this first Gospel acclimates us to what is to come. We are invited to stand “watch” with Christ, to make the effort this service requires.

When I was growing up, my family would, of course, attend this service and all the services from Holy Wednesday evening on. Churches were always filled to capacity for the Twelve Gospels, the Holy Friday Vespers and the other Holy Week Services. So it was only natural that moving here to Santa Rosa in 1985 (to be the Choir Director) I would expect our little church to be absolutely packed during Holy Week. Our choir spent months preparing the chants for Holy Week, especially for the service of the Twelve Gospels. When we began that holy service, the choir, the priest and I were shocked that only a quarter of our parish members attended. Alas, subsequent years has increased this percentage to maybe one third of our parish. I am asking all of you to set aside every obligation and care in order to be together with Jesus Christ during the days of Holy Week, and especially on the evenings of Holy Thursday and Holy Friday. These services lead to, prepare us for, and enable us to enter into Pascha itself. One might say that these three days have the potential to open the Gospel to us in a way no teacher, book, or event could do. Come and see. I would advise parents of toddlers to have a babysitter, since we expect the Matins to end sometime around 9:30 PM. The motivation to write this brief message arises from my love for you, and the hope that all of you may be edified, inspired and blessed. —Fr. Lawrence Margitich

- DONATIONS FOR PASCHA FLOWERS:

A donation basket will be set out after the Liturgy on Sunday to collect funds for Holy Week and Pascha flower decorations.

- ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SINGLES RETREAT:

San Diego, CA, May 26 – 29, 2017. Join other Orthodox Christian singles at the Orthodox Singles Retreat in San Diego, California. The University of St. Katherine is hosting a Pan-Orthodox singles event for adults of any age. The university can host up to 200 singles. Fr. John Reimann and other priests will conduct services. Events during the retreat will include worshipping together, a service project, games, a visit to the San Diego Zoo and more! For more details about the event, please email the event administrator, Donna Marie Fletcher at OrthodoxSinglesRetreat@mail.com.

- PASCHA CANDLE DECORATING:

Vicky Basch and Shannon Winterton are planning to decorate Pascha candles on Holy Friday and would like to invite all the children to participate. (Actually, anyone of any age that would like to decorate a candle for Pascha is welcome.) The project will begin at noon on Holy Friday, and go until about 2:30-3 PM, which allows us to get ready for the Great Friday Vespers at 3 PM. A light sandwich lunch will be provided for the children (of course, adults are fasting that day) and then we will decorate candles. The kids can take their candle home and then bring it back for Pascha. After Pascha, you can use the candle on your home prayer altar. Younger children will need an adult with them to assist them. Please let Vicky or Shannon know if you are coming so we can provide sufficient decorations and candles. If you have something special to put on your candle, please feel free to bring it.

- MUSIC AND POETRY: BRIGHT FRIDAY, APRIL 21:

Sign up with Vladimir now to reserve time on the program and seats for the meal. Chicken and salad will be provided as well as some Parish wine—you bring the rest. Several musicians and poets have already committed to presenting their talents. Yours are needed as well. The fact that we have a Music & Poetry Evening convinced more than one of our congregation that this was The Parish For Them. Let's prove they were right.

- BLESSING OF GRAVES—RADONITSA:

Tuesday, April 25 is *Radonitsa*, a “day of rejoicing.” I invite you to join with me in the blessing of the graves of our beloved parishioners and family members. I begin the blessing at Pleasant Hills Cemetery in Sebastopol at 10 AM, move on to Forestville, Healdsburg and end up at Santa Rosa Memorial Park. What's this all about? During Holy Week and Bright Week the Church instructs us not to sing memorial services. However, we begin those Memorial Prayers once again on the Tuesday after Bright Week, traditionally visiting the cemeteries to sing Christ is Risen at the grave sides of those departed this life. Perhaps we can have a caravan and a picnic too??? —Fr. Lawrence

- PRACTICING A SPIRITUALITY OF THANKSGIVING

In order to achieve a sacramental vision of creation, human beings are called to practice a spirituality of thanksgiving and self-discipline. In theological terms, we are called to be “eucharistic” and “ascetic” beings. In this way, the Orthodox Church reminds us that creation is not simply our possession or property, but rather a gift from God, the Creator, a gift of wonder and beauty. From the moment of creation, this world was offered by God as a gift to be returned in gratitude and love. This is precisely how the Orthodox spiritual way avoids the problem of the world's domination by humanity. For if this world is a sacred mystery, then this in itself precludes any attempt at mastery by human beings. Indeed, the mastery or exploitative control of the world's resources is identified more with Adam's “original sin” than with God's wonderful gift. It is the result of selfishness and greed, which arise from alienation from God and an abandonment of the sacramental worldview. Sin separated the sacred from the secular, dismissing the latter to the domain of evil and surrendering it as prey to exploitation.

—*Patriarch Bartholemew of Constantinople*