

# THE ORTHODOX MESSENGER

APRIL 2019, Vol. 27, Issue 4

## THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

IN ANY KIND of difficult challenge, it's always inspiring to know that you are half way to the end. It might be a race, a school year, or a project at work; if you've made it this far, you know that you can eventually reach your goal.

We are now half way through the season of Lent, and the Church calls our attention today to the great symbol of victory, the great sign of hope, our Lord's cross. During the time of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, of course, no one was inspired by the cross, for it was a feared instrument of execution. No one honored the cross and certainly no one thought that God's Messiah would die on one.

So it was profoundly shocking when the Savior told His disciples that He would be rejected, suffer, die, and rise again. When St. Peter tried to correct Him, Christ called him "Satan" and said that he was thinking in human terms, not God's. Then the Lord told the disciples what they didn't want to hear. They too must take up their crosses and lose their lives; that's the way to enter into the blessed salvation of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The hard truth that Jesus Christ broke to His disciples was that we can't jump ahead to the joy of the empty tomb. We must first go with our Lord to the cross; we too must die in order to rise again. And the unpopular truth is that every last one of us needs to die to our sinfulness, to how we have distorted ourselves, our relationships, and our world. The Son of God offered Himself in free obedience to the Holy Trinity, taking upon Himself the full consequences of sin and death to the point of a horrible execution; He did so out of love for us. And thus He opened the way to the Kingdom of heaven, to life eternal, for you, me, and all humankind; indeed, for the entire creation.

And that way is the cross, for if we want to share in the joy of His resurrection, of His victory over death, we must first participate in the struggle, pain, and sacrifice of crucifixion. We must crucify the habits of thought, word, and deed that lead us to worship and serve ourselves instead of God and neighbor. We must kill our pride, our selfishness, and our slavery to pleasure.

If we don't crucify these passions, our souls will be too sick, dark, and weak to share in the glory of the resurrec-

tion. Like St. Peter, we will think in human terms, not God's, no matter how religious or moral we appear to others.

And the reality is that we have no shortage of opportunities to take up our crosses. When we struggle to resist a temptation, when we battle angry thoughts against those who have wronged or somehow irritated us, and when we endure deep sorrows and disappointments with trust in God's faithfulness and mercy, we take up the cross.

Fortunately, we do not go to the cross alone. No matter what we are tempted to think at times, our Savior is no stranger to temptation, suffering, pain, and death. He sympathizes with our struggles because He endured them. He was literally nailed to a cross, died, was buried, and descended into Hades in order to bring the joy of life eternal to corrupt, weak, imperfect people like you and me through His glorious third-day resurrection. And in order to follow Him to the joy of Pascha, we must likewise take up our cross.

So as we begin the second half of Lent, let us keep our eyes on the prize, looking to the great trophy of our Savior's victory over sin and death, the cross, through which joy has come into all the world. And even though it is a struggle and none of us does it particularly well, let us put aside our own preferences and obsessions in order to take up the cross through prayer, fasting, forgiveness, mending broken relationships, and showing generosity to those in need. Let us offer our lives in free obedience to the Father, accepting whatever pain and struggle there may be in setting things right in our lives as best we can. And no matter what burdens we may bear, no matter our frustrations and failures, let us press on the joy of Pascha. Jesus Christ participated in death in order to bring us into His life, and we must participate in His death in order to share in the glory of His resurrection. So let us deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Him. For this alone is the way to the brilliant light and eternal blessedness of the Kingdom of God.— April 8, 2013, [Fr. Philip LeMasters](#)



*On Saturday evening, the Precious Cross will be solemnly brought out of the Altar near the end of Service. We all kneel as it comes forth.*

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## SANCTIFY THE LORD GOD IN YOUR HEARTS

WITHIN THE spiritual heart, in the “hidden man of the heart” (1 Peter 3:4), is the holy altar in which God is glorified, and it is there that the “mystical sacrifice of the *nous*” must be made, according to the exhortation of the Apostle Peter: “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.” It is there that the “priest of God’s grace” serves with unceasing prayer, even if he is not a clergyman, according to the words of the apostle, “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). Within the spiritual heart, after it has been purified, the *nous* finds the grace of baptism and chrismation. It meets the sacred altar of the inner holy temple where through noetic prayer the ceaseless internalized liturgy is performed. When this happens it ignites even more the desire for participation in the Divine Liturgy that is performed in the holy temple on earth, and it increases the desire for communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. This inner liturgy moves man to glorify the Trinitarian God for everything performed in the Church; it incites him to revere the priesthood, honor the saints, love whatever God loves, and rejoice in Orthodoxy. — from *My Elder Joseph the Hesychast*, postscript by Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos



## Preparing and Decorating the Cathedral for Holy Week and Pascha

- **Saturday, March 30**, training at 2:30 PM to learn how to decorate the Holy Cross
- **Friday, April 19**: Pick up of palms and flowers with Denise Pellizzer after Matins (about 9 AM)
  - 10 AM: Prepare flowers for vases and the icon of the feast (about 3.5 hours of work)
- **Saturday, April 20**, following the Baptisms, Liturgy and Reception on Lazarus Saturday. We need volunteers to learn how to braid palms and to decorate the Cathedral for feast of Palm Sunday. Vigil begins at 5 PM.
- **Sunday, April 21** (on Palm Sunday): Crew needed after Agape Meal to remove decorations. The Pascha Procession Practice will also take place after the Agape Meal, at approximately 12:45 PM
- **Thursday, April 25** (Liturgy of the Lord’s Supper): After the 11:30 AM Vespertal Liturgy we will place the large Crucifixion icon in the middle of the Church and place some flowers around it. Prep flowers for the Shroud (Plashchanitsa/Epitaphios), iconostasis and Pascha
- **Friday, April 26** (Holy and Great Friday): Following the 9 AM Service of the Royal Hours, we will continue to work on the floral arrangements for the Shroud and Pascha. All should be done by 2:45 PM in preparation for the 3 PM Great Vespers Service and the Bringing out of the Shroud.
- **Great and Holy Saturday, April 27**: Final preparations for Pascha following the Vespertal Liturgy: decorate chandeliers, move Crucifixion back to its usual spot, floral arrangements for the Iconostasis, the Three-Branched Paschal Candle, and final clean up of the Cathedral before resting.



All are welcome to help and learn. Please contact Denise Pellizzer at (707) 796-3498 or email [accen-toncolor@gmail.com](mailto:accen-toncolor@gmail.com) with a CC to Karen Werder [mkarenwerder@gmail.com](mailto:mkarenwerder@gmail.com)

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ON TUESDAY, APRIL 2, Fr. John will teach about Confession. 6:30 PM. This class is geared not only for the Catechumens, but for anyone interested in learning how to prepare for the Holy Mystery of Confession.
- ON APRIL 6, Bishop Daniel will present a retreat on Holy Week. Child Care will be available. Speak with Sarah Hamner. Flyers for the retreat are at the Candle Desk. Registration and refreshments at 9:30 AM. The Parish Council Members will have a dinner with Vlada Daniel following Vespers that evening.
- CONFESSIONS ON FRIDAYS: Unless the Calendar indicates otherwise, I will be available on Fridays to hear confessions from 11:30 AM–1 PM. No appointment needed. —Fr. Lawrence
- THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK is held on the second Wednesday each month—April 10. Volunteers, please arrive around 5 PM to help set up. This Food Bank is an important way in which our parish does outreach to the community. Come and participate.
- PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO will be baptized on Lazarus Saturday: Harriette; James and his son Harvey; Aaron and Alejandra and their children Aaron, Xavier, Paloma, Belen and Celeste; and Otto Molcillo (son of our new members Christina and Nathan Molcillo).
- APPROACHING THE HOLY CHALICE: When coming forward to receive Holy Communion, please cross your arms in the traditional manner, and tell your name to the priest, but speak it as you would to Jesus Christ Himself, with love and a holy fear of God. We prepare to receive Holy Communion by praying the Prayers of Preparation before Communion, keeping a fast from midnight and at least a monthly Confession.
- A BEAUTIFUL and artistically crafted wooden railing has been installed in the Protection Church by the choir area. The step down from the choir has tripped up more than a few people—we hope the railing will help. Our thanks to Michael Dovey for his fine craftsmanship.
- A BYZANTINE style chanter lamp was purchased and installed in the Protection Church. We are grateful for the donor and to Tom Pellizzer for installing the fixture.
- THANKS TO SOME very generous donations, a new Sebo X4 vacuum cleaner was purchased for St. Seraphim. Alexander Stameroff has volunteered to keep this “industrial strength” vacuum in good working order.
- WE ARE ALSO grateful for the donations which allowed us to purchase a new, robust and sturdy wireless mic system for the Parish Hall.
- THE CHILDREN’S CHOIR will sing at the Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday, April 20. Baptisms are at 9 AM, the Liturgy will begin at 10 AM.
- ON THE FIFTH THURSDAY of the Lent, this year on April 11, we will sing Matins with the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and hear the Life of St. Mary of Egypt, interspersed. We begin at 8 AM, and finish about 11 AM.
- ON THE FIFTH FRIDAY of Lent we sing the marvelous, uplifting and comforting Matins of the Akathist Hymn at 6 PM. The following morning we will have the Divine Liturgy for this Lenten Feast Day. “Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.”
- THE BREAKFAST RECEPTION for those baptized on Lazarus Saturday is customarily offered by those who were baptized on that day in years past. So—calling all “Lazarites” to come forward.
- DAPHNE RUSSELL will be dying eggs for Pascha—speak with her about helping out.
- SIGN UP SHEETS for Holy Week and Pascha will be posted on Saturday, April 6.
- CONFESSION: During Great Lent, we intensify our spiritual work, fasting, works of mercy, prayers at home, prayers in Church, and we make an effort to keep a watch on our mind, heart and words. We want to cleanse our souls and bodies, our minds and passions. This is the work of repentance, which is renewal and knowledge of ourselves. This is how we take Lent seriously. Of course we are going to make a Confession during Lent, maybe numerous times, as we struggle to cleanse the image of God in us. Don’t delay. PLEASE NOTE: For those over the age of seven who wish to receive Holy Communion during Holy Week and Pascha, it is a holy obligation to make a confession at least once in the three weeks before Holy Week. And so we prepare for Pascha.
- PLEASE PLAN AHEAD: No Confessions will be heard after Holy Wednesday. Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of repentance—Holy Week is the time of the Lord’s passion and many Services, and there is no time for confession.

# Let Us Go Up to Jerusalem: Walking with Christ Through Holy Week



SAINT SERAPHIM OF SAROV ORTHODOX CHURCH LENTEN RETREAT WITH



**His Grace, Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa**

**April 6th 9:30-3:30 · Vespers begins at 5:00**

\$15/participant

Lunch will be provided for all participants.

“We have come, O faithful, to the saving Passion of Christ our God: let us glorify His ineffable forbearance, that in His tender mercy He may also raise us up who have been slain by sin, for He is good and loves mankind.” (from Holy Monday Matins)

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

APRIL 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>March 31 – Veneration of the Cross</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy (N.B. <i>Matins served on Sat.</i>)</li> <li>• 11:45 AM, Church School</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> <li>• 3 PM, <i>Concert: Green Mountain Singers</i></li> </ul>	1	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 6:30 PM, Catechism #2 on Confession</li> </ul>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified, meal to follow</li> </ul>	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> </ul>	<b>5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10:30 AM, Presanctified Liturgy</li> </ul>	<b>6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 AM, Retreat led by Bishop Daniel</b></li> <li>• 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>On Holy Unction</i></li> <li>• 4 PM, Children's Choir</li> <li>• 5 PM, Great Vespers</li> </ul>
<b>7 – St. John Climacus / St. Tikhon</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy (Bp Daniel present)</li> <li>• 11:45 AM, Church School</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> <li>• <b>Sisterhood Meeting</b></li> </ul>	8	<b>9</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> </ul>	<b>10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 5 PM, <i>Redwood Empire Food Bank</i></li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified, meal to follow</li> </ul>	<b>11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins with the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete</li> </ul>	<b>12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions</li> <li>• 6 PM, Matins of the Akathist Hymn</li> </ul>	<b>13 – Akathist Saturday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 3:30 PM, Catechism, <i>On Death and the Funeral</i></li> <li>• 5 PM, Great Vespers</li> </ul>
<b>14 – St. Mary of Egypt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8:40 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 11:45 AM, Church School</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	15	<b>16</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> </ul>	<b>17</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified, meal to follow</li> </ul>	<b>18</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> </ul>	<b>19 – End of Lent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Matins</li> <li>• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Matins of Lazarus Saturday</li> <li>• 7 PM, Baptismal Catechesis</li> </ul>	<b>20 – Lazarus Saturday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Baptisms</li> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy, Reception for baptized <i>Afternoon: cleaning and decoration of Church</i></li> <li>• 5 PM, Vigil, blessing of palms</li> </ul>
<b>21 – Entrance into Jerusalem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy and Procession</li> <li>• 11:45 AM, Church School</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> <li>• 12:45 PM, Procession practice</li> </ul>	<b>22 – Holy Monday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6:30 AM, Bridegroom Matins</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified</li> </ul>	<b>23 – Holy Tuesday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6:30 AM, Bridegroom Matins</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified</li> </ul>	<b>24 – Holy Wednesday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6:30 AM, Bridegroom Matins</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Presanctified</li> </ul>	<b>25 – Holy Thursday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11:30 AM, Vesperal Liturgy</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Matins of Holy Friday</li> </ul>	<b>26 – Holy Friday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Royal Hours</li> <li>• 3 PM, Vespers with the bringing out of Holy Shroud</li> <li>• 6:15 PM, Matins of Holy Saturday</li> </ul>	<b>27 – Holy Saturday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 PM, Vesperal Liturgy</li> <li>• 11:30 PM, Nocturn</li> <li>• Midnight, Matins and Divine Liturgy</li> </ul>
<b>28 – PASCHA</b> <i>We begin at Midnight, Saturday</i> 11:30 AM, Church Cleaning 1 PM, Agape Vespers Potluck picnic to follow	<b>29 – Bright Monday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Paschal Matins and Divine Liturgy (Archbishop Benjamin serving)</li> </ul>	<b>30 – Bright Tuesday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Paschal Vespers</li> </ul>	May 1	<b>2 – Bright Thursday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Paschal Vespers</li> </ul>	<b>3 – Bright Friday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Paschal Vespers</li> </ul>	<b>4 – Bright Saturday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Paschal Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 5 PM, Great Vespers</li> </ul>