

Next Saturday, April 4, about Noon, the church will be decorated in preparation for the Palm Sunday Vigil, Holy Week and Pascha—see Denise Pellizzer to help.

During Holy Week attend as many services as you can. Set aside Holy Week to be holy. *Seek first the Kingdom of God...* We have two services each day (except Wednesday). Plan ahead. If you cannot attend a service, then read the scriptures and the main hymns of that day, posted **HERE**. It is in the liturgical worship that we become participants—rather than spectators—in events of the Lord’s Passion and Resurrection. The services of Holy Week are neither dramatizations of sacred history nor spiritual entertainment. Holy Week is a single unbroken sacred Service that carries us through ten days of the saving acts of Jesus Christ—it’s all about Him and our participation in His life, our taking the same path. In the words of Fr Stephen Freeman, our liturgical worship is “according to Tradition and focuses its attention on God. It is not there for you to ‘get something out of it.’” It’s only when we approach worship in that way do actually we receive more than we could hope for. Does it seem unreasonable to attend Church so much in a single week, twice a day? It is absolutely extravagant and outrageous! But Christ’s love for us is sacrificial and without measure. And so we return that love during Holy Week in a way that is beyond reason! Let us all submit ourselves to the spiritual therapy of Holy Week. —*Fr Lawrence*

An important, even essential aspect of our preparation for entering into Holy Week is the *Sacrament of Confession*. Please come before Holy Wednesday, after which no Confessions will be heard. All those over age 7 should make a confession. *Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of repentance* (2 Cor. 6:2).

—*Fr. Lawrence*

Regarding liturgical composure, let’s turn our attention to the time before and after Holy Communion. When the priest brings the chalice out of the Altar, we should all make a reverence by bowing low. While people are receiving, we should avoid conversations and greetings (there’s time for that later). We strive to be quiet, focused in preparing for Communion and nurture gratitude after receiving It. After communion, when the priest blesses us with the chalice, saying, “Blessed is our God, always, now and ever...” we should not have our backs turned away, but once again, we bow low with reverence and gratitude.

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 29, 2026

The Fifth Week of Lent: St. Mary of Egypt



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone One:
When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: “Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!”
- TROPARION OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT, Tone Eight:
In thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up the Cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul, since it is immortal. Wherefore, O righteous Mother Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.
- KONTAKION OF ST. MARY, Tone Three:
Thou who once of old wast filled with all manner of fornication, art now seen today to be a bride of Christ by thy repentance. Thou didst live and emulate the life of the Angels. By the Cross, thou didst annihilate the hordes of demons; for this cause art thou a bride now in the Kingdom of the Heavens, O Mary, thou all-modest one.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Friday, March 27: 6 PM, Matins with the Akathist to the Theotokos
- Sat., March 28: 3:30 PM, Catechism: *On Death and the Funeral*
5 PM, Great Vespers/Confession
6 PM, Family Potluck—*Prep for Holy Week & Pascha*
- Sunday, March 29: 8 AM, Divine Liturgy in the Protection
9:40 AM, Reception of Catechumens*
10 AM, Divine Liturgy / Spiritual Lesson for teens
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
- Tues., March 31: 8 AM, Matins
- Wed., April 1: 8 AM, Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6 PM, Presanctified Liturgy, Meal
- Thurs., April 2: 8 AM, Matins
7 PM, On-line Bible Study with Fr. James
- Friday, April 3: 8 AM, Matins ~ *Last day of Lent*
11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions (added to calendar)
6 PM, Lazarus Sat. Matins and Baptismal Prep
- Sat., April 4: 9 AM, Baptisms & Chrismations
10 AM, Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday
Agape Meal Reception for newly-baptized to follow
Noon, Church decoration and clean up

* **Please welcome** Ariel and Logan, becoming catechumens on Sunday at 9:40 AM, and pray for those preparing to be baptized and chrismated on Lazarus Saturday: Kristin (Krissy) Abshire, Forrest William Condit (after St. William of Gellone, France), Nikki Singh (St. Seraphim), Nicholas Morgan, Eileen Waggoner (St. Mary Magdalena), Samuel Still.

Christ—the Joy, the Truth and the Light of all the Life of the World and the Resurrection—has appeared in His love to those on earth. He has become the Image of our Resurrection, granting divine forgiveness to all. (*Lazarus Saturday hymn*). Christ

comes to raise His friend, dead four days already. This important day in the history of salvation reveals the enemy—death—and announces the victory to come. The day is very appropriate for the baptism of catechumens. Fr Alexander Schmemmann wrote: “The power of Resurrection is not a Divine ‘power in itself,’ but power of love, or rather *love as power*. God is Love and Love is Life, Love creates Life... It is Love that weeps at the grave and it is Love that restores life. This is the meaning of the Divine tears of Jesus. In them love is at work again—recreating, redeeming, restoring the darkened life of man: ‘Lazarus, come forth...’” We celebrate this important feast, a time of transition between Lent and Holy Week, with a brief Matins on Friday, April 3 and the Baptisms and Divine Liturgy on Sat., March 4.

Our Holy Week and Pascha activity SIGN-UP SHEETS in the narthex await your names. There are many tasks to do—a few people are not capable of completing all those tasks. Your involvement is important. There are a few important slots open still, one of them being the need for someone at the candle-desk on Holy Thursday evening.

The live-streaming of church services by our team is very much appreciated by our shut-ins and those who are ill. Also, it helps with making the parish visible online. We need two more people to learn how to livestream. Please speak with Fr Lawrence, Tim Danford, Nikki Singh or Brendan Doonan if you are interested in getting trained.

Our Pascha procession rehearsal will take place after lunch on Palm Sunday. Peter Tennyson, our procession-master, will gather all those who are tasked with holding icons (mostly it is those who were received into the Church during the last year after Pascha). The procession is comprised of the following: a lantern, a cross (2 actually), banners, selected icons ONLY. We let all those folks to line up and exit the church BEFORE us. Following the icons, we have clergy, and then all the people directly after the priests.

On Sundays after the Agape Meal, may I kindly ask all of us, before leaving the church grounds, to take a look around and collect stray coffee cups, utensils, water bottles, bulletins, books, clothes and sundry other items which have been left by the bells, the fire-pit area, the playground and the porch. We all need to do a better job at caring for this holy place. —Fr L