



*My House shall be called a House of Prayer,
but you have made it a Den of Thieves.*

**Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church Bulletin
And Holy Transfiguration Chapel**
A Parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
870 Forest Street
Dover, Delaware 19904
Website: www.snicholasuoc.org



Father Stephen Hutnick
(302) 798-4455
E-mail: otche10@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 870 Forest Street
Dover, DE 19904

We would like to welcome all of our visitors and friends to Saint Nicholas Orthodox Parish. We would like to ask all of our new visitors to please sign our register so that we might be able to keep in contact with you about Parish celebrations and events. Through the intercession of Saint Nicholas we hope and pray that our community might continue to grow in numbers and in service to the Lord. Through your prayers and dedication of time, talents and donations, this can become a reality in all faith and in love.

In case of an emergency, please call Father Stephen day or night at the above telephone number.

April 21, 2024
Volume 17: Number 16
Celebrating our 17th Year of Serving the Lord
Schedule of Services and Activities

Sunday, April 21 – Fifth Sunday of the Fast – Tone 5
9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy for the Faithful – Father Gus

Thursday, April 25
6:00 PM – Presanctified Liturgy – All Souls

Sunday, April 28 – Palm or Willow Sunday – Tone 6
9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy for the Faithful – Father Gus

Holy Wednesday, May 1
2:00 PM – Anointing of the Sick – Father Stephen

Holy and Great Friday – May 3
4:00 PM _ Vespers with the Procession of the Shroud

Paskha – The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
8:00 AM – The Service at the Tomb, Resurrection Matins
Divine Liturgy – Blessing of the Baskets

SCRIPTURAL READINGS

5th Sunday of the Fast - Matins John 20:11-18; Liturgy: Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 10:32-45; **St. Mary of Egypt**: Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 7:36-50.

Monday: Genesis 27: 1-41; * Proverbs 19:16-25 * Isaiah 48:17- 49:44

Tuesday: Genesis 31:3-16; * Proverbs 21:3-21 * Isaiah 49:6-10

Wednesday: Genesis 43:26 - 31; * Proverbs 21:23 - 22:4 * Isaiah 58:1-11

Thursday: Genesis 46: 1-7 * Proverbs 23: 15 - 24:5 * Isaiah 65:8-16

Friday: Feast of the Annunciation: Matins: Luke 1:39-46; 56. Vespers/Liturgy: Genesis 28:10-17; Ezechiel 43:27-44:4; Exodus 3:1-8; Hebrews 2:11-18; Luke 1:24-38. Day: Genesis 49:33-50 * Proverbs 31:8-32 * Isaiah 66: 10 - 24

Lazarus Saturday Hebrews 12:28 - 13:8 * John 11:1-45; Great Vespers: Genesis. 49: 1-2, 8-12; Zephaniah 3:14-19; Zacharias 9:9-15

Palm Sunday (Flowery Sunday) - Matins: Matthew 21:1-11; 15-17; Liturgy Philippians 4:4-9; John 12:1-18

SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - SUNDAY OF MARY OF EGYPT

Saint Mary of Egypt was born in the middle of the fourth century and at the age of twelve she left her parents for a life of prostitution in Alexandria. One summer, Mary encountered a large group of pilgrims in route to Jerusalem for the celebration of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross. She was so moved by the crowd, not due to her devout faith, but because she saw among the men the great potential for her sexual gratification, that she set sail with them for the Holy Land. At sea and in the city of Jerusalem, she continued her shameful behavior.

On the day of the Feast, Mary was prevented by an unknown force from entering the Church of the Resurrection. She began to weep alongside the Icon of the Mother of God for her sins of prostitution and cried out to the Holy Virgin that she would renounce her life of lust if granted the opportunity to see the relic of the True Cross in the Church. This was granted and St. Mary of Egypt was commanded to go and live across the Jordan River and find glorious rest there. She retired to the desert for a life of repentance of nearly fifty years. Her only contact with others were two visits from the monk, Abba Zossima. He met St. Mary during her forty-seventh year in the desert and agreed to return a year later to bring her the precious Eucharist on the banks of the Jordan. This he did but at first Mary was unable to reach him on the opposite bank so she walked upon the water to receive her Savior.

Mary was to have met Abba Zossima again the following year, but when the holy monk arrived he discovered that she had died. Mary of Egypt's regular feastday is April 14th. She is commemorated during Great Lent as a reminder to us of sincere repentance.

Troparion, Tone 8 - In you, O Mother, was exactly preserved what was according to the divine image. For you took the Cross and followed Christ, and by your life, taught us to ignore the flesh, since it is transitory, but to care for the soul as an immortal thing. Therefore, your spirit, St. Mary, rejoices with the Angels.

Kontakion, tone 4 - Having escaped the fog of sin, and having illumined your heart with the light of penitence, O glorious one, you came to Christ and offered to Him His immaculate and holy Mother as a merciful intercessor. Hence you have found remission of transgressions, and with the Angels you ever rejoice.

END OF THE GREAT FAST

One might have scarcely even noticed, but the Great Fast, which began so dramatically at Vespers on Forgiveness Sunday, six weeks ago, ended quietly this past Friday during the Presanctified Liturgy. We leap right from the Fast into Holy Week; the week that we participate in the last seven days of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's life here on earth. It is genuinely a time of real reflection, prayer and meditation. Our Fasting should now be more austere, our prayer life, that time that we spend with God, should increase.

In yesterday's Gospel reading (John 11:1-45) we hear of Christ's revelation as both God and man. As a man, He weeps and prays at the tomb of Lazarus, His friend. As God, Christ calls Lazarus back to life. Today we celebrate the real person of Christ and pay Him the homage and praise due to Him as our Lord and our King. We should shout out with joy with the Children of Israel in the Jerusalem of our hearts and our souls to Jesus, our Messianic King with the royal acclamation: "Hosanna!"

Beginning with Monday of Holy Week, we change our readings from Genesis and Proverbs to the Books of Exodus and Job. Exodus brings us directly into the narrative of the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea, the First Passover, which prefigures the Passover of Christ; His death and Resurrection. Job teaches us that God's saving grace is a mystery of love. We do not always understand what God does or why God does it; we must trust in God and not pride-fully think that we know better than God knows.

Let us joyfully witness and most importantly participate in this last week in the life of our Lord. Let us try to attend all the Church services. Let us try to experience the love that God offers us; for then we truly understand the message of the Gospel of St. John in our Lord's Passion, Death and glorious Resurrection: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him" (John 3:16-17). Let us come and witness this love. Let us come and partake of this love by receiving the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion. Let us be inspired by this love, that God loves us that much that He lays His life down for us, His friends. Let us then share this love by the way we treat one another and all those whom we meet. Then the message of God's love in His Passion, Death and glorious Resurrection will never fade, for it will be alive in us.

ON THE WAY TO BETHANY AND JERUSALEM



We enter the sixth and last week of the Great Fast. For six days prior to Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday, the liturgy of the Church makes us follow Christ as He first announces the death of His friend Lazarus and then begins His journey to Bethany and Jerusalem. The theme and tone of the week are given on Sunday night at Vespers: Beginning with zeal the sixth week of the fast, we shall bring to the Lord hymns, announcing the feast of the palms; to Him who comes in glory and power Divine to Jerusalem to put death to death."

The center of attention is Lazarus - his sickness, his death, the grief of his relatives and Christ's reaction to all of this.

On Monday we hear "Today the sickness of Lazarus appears to Christ as He walks on the other side of the Jordan." On Tuesday, "Yesterday and today, Lazarus is sick." On Wednesday, "Today the dead Lazarus is being buried and his relatives weep." On Thursday, "For two days now Lazarus has been dead." On Friday, "Tomorrow Christ comes... to raise the dead brother of Martha and Mary."



So, the entire week is spent in the spiritual contemplation of the forthcoming encounter between Christ and death - first in the person of His friend Lazarus and then in Christ's own death. It is the approach of that "hour of Christ" of which He so often spoke of and toward which all His earthly ministry was oriented. We must ask ourselves: "What is the meaning of this contemplation in the Lenten Liturgy? How is it related to our own Lenten offering?"

In the commemoration of the events of Christ's life, the Church very often if not always, transposes past into present. On Christmas day we sing: "Today, the Virgin gives birth..." On Good Friday, "Today, Christ stands before Pilate..." On Palm Sunday, "Today He comes to Jerusalem." What is the significance of this liturgical "today"? One can say without exaggeration that the whole life of the Church is one continuous commemoration and remembrance. At the end of each service we say, "whose memory we celebrate" but behind the memories, the Church is the remembrance of Jesus Christ. Liturgical celebration is a re-entrance of the Church into the event and this means not merely its idea but also its joy and sadness, its living and concrete reality.

It is one thing to explain that the resurrection of Lazarus was "to confirm the universal resurrection" from the tropar). It is quite a different thing to celebrate day after day for one entire week this slowly approaching encounter between life and death, to become a part of it, to see with our own eyes and feel with our whole being what was involved in the words of St. John, "He groaned in the spirit and was troubled and wept" (John 11:33-35). For us and to us all this happens today. we were not there, in Bethany at the grave with the crying sisters. From the Gospel we only know about it. But it is in the Church's celebration today that an historical fact becomes an event for us, for me, a power in my life, a memory, a joy.

The resurrection of Lazarus, the wonderful celebration of that unique Saturday is beyond Lent. It is on the Friday preceding it that we sing, "Having completed the edifying forty days"... In liturgical terms, Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday are the beginning of the Cross. But the last week of Lent, this week, is the ultimate revelation of the meaning of lent. Lent is a preparation for the Resurrection. Lent and the Resurrection are often put side by side without any real understanding of their connection. Even if Lent is not understood as the season of the fulfillment of a once-a-year Confession and Communion, it is usually thought of in terms of individual effort and thus remains self-centered. What is absent from the Lenten experience is that physical and spiritual effort aimed at our participation in the "today" of Christ's Resurrection, the partaking of the ultimate and all-embracing "today" of Christ.

During this last week of preparation for the Resurrection, the celebration of the mystery begins. Lenten effort has made us capable of putting aside all that which usually obscures the central object of our faith, hope and joy.



Lazarus Saturday

This day, along with Flowery (Palm) Sunday, occupies a special position between the Great Fast, which ends the day before, and Great Week, which begins the day after Flowery Sunday. Following the forty days of penitence which have just ended, and immediately before the days of darkness and mourning which are to follow in Passion Week, there comes two days of joy and triumph on which the Church is festive. The Saturday before Flowery Sunday celebrates the raising of Lazarus at Bethany (John 11:1-44). This miracle is performed by Christ as a reassurance to His disciples before the coming Passion. They are to understand that, though He suffers and dies, yet He is the Lord and Victor over Death. The raising of Lazarus is a prophecy in the form of action. It foreshadows Christ's own Resurrection eight days later, and at the same time it anticipates the resurrection of the righteous on the Last Day: The saving first-fruits of the regeneration of the world (1 Corinthians 15). The liturgical texts emphasize that the miracle at Bethany reveals the two natures of Christ Who is both Human and God. Christ asks where Lazarus is laid and weeps for him showing the fullness of His humanity for it involves human ignorance and genuine grief for a beloved friend. Then, disclosing the fullness of His divine power, He raises Lazarus from the dead even though his corpse has already begun to decompose and stink. This double fullness of Christ's divinity and humanity should be kept in mind throughout Great Week, and above all on Great Friday. We perceive a genuine human agony on the Cross, which is both physical and mental. However, we see more than this; we behold not only a suffering human being, but also a suffering God!

THE IMAGE OF TRUE REPENTANCE

Throughout the season of the Great Fast, one message has echoed repeatedly: **REPENTANCE!** In fact, even before the beginning of this 40 day fast, our Holy Orthodox Church places before us the thought that we must repent of our sins if we are to be found worthy of the great gift of salvation that the Resurrected Christ brings to His faithful followers.

It must be said, however, that true repentance is a process that is often misunderstood. True repentance involves much more than merely confessing our sins. It even goes far beyond expressing sincere sorrow for our transgressions. Indeed true repentance call out to us to **CHANGE OUR LIVES COMPLETELY!** When we repent of our sins, we are expected to strive with all our strength to rid our lives of the shameful things that we do which are contrary to God's laws. Repentance is "making right" all of the "wrongs" of which we are guilty.

No one understood the necessity of true repentance better than St. Mary of Egypt. In her early years, Mary lived a life of immorality and promiscuity. While visiting Jerusalem one

day, her eyes were opened to the sinfulness of her ways when some "hidden force" prevented her from entering the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Realizing her unworthiness before God, this 6th century Saint retired to the desert region beyond the Jordan River leaving her past life behind. For nearly 50 years she devoted her life to prayer and fasting, as she attempted to live in a manner that properly captured the spirit of repentance.

This is why our Holy Orthodox Church honors her memory every year on the Fifth Sunday of the great Fast. As this sacred time of the year rapidly draws to a close, we are asked to be imitators of St. Mary of Egypt and to find encouragement in her example as we, too, struggle to overcome our sins.

Reconciliation

The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent is dedicated to St. Mary of Egypt. Here is an example of a real sinner before her conversion. Like Mary Magdalene, she was a scandal by her life style. However, when she repented and was reconciled with God, she lived a very austere and penitential life. She is a good example of God's readiness to forgive and receive back into His loving arms a true prodigal. Mary of Egypt is a beautiful example of a sinner turned saint.

Her example of repentance should be an inspiration to all of us. We have a wonderful opportunity through the sacramental mystery of Penance to obtain forgiveness. The same Jesus who cured the leper with a touch and forgave sins with a word now uses a priest as His instrument to heal and forgive, to teach and console, to correct and encourage.

In this sacramental mystery Jesus assures us of His love and pardon when we approach Him with honesty and really open our hearts to Him. His love and mercy is constant and never wavers regardless of the number or gravity of our sins. "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31: 3).

Our Lord never leaves us to our limited resources. He assures us He will continue to cleanse and purify us, to free us from the forces of evil and to restore us to spiritual health. With this comes inner peace.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY - is expressed to Sofia Rus, 4/22 & Sonja Biddle, 4/26. May God grant them a very happy birthday and keep them for many, happy & blessed years!

REDNER FULL SALE SLIPS – are still being collected. Please save the whole slip.

READER MINISTRY: April 14 - Margaret Perkins, April 21 – Subdeacon Kevin Minnich; April 28 – Christina Mentis

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL – Metropolitan Antony, Father Geroge Bazylevsky, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Constantine Christo, Father Vasyl Dovhan, Father Oleh Hucul, Father Mark Leisure, Father John Nakonachny, Father James Norton, Father Paul Pappas, Father John Perich, Father Volodymyr Wronskyj, Pani Matka Lilly Lemar, Matushka Laura Odell, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Jamison, Wakako Alexander, Theresa Barnes, Paul Calistor, Rita Cook, Dmitra Cookson, Davis William Doty; Steve Forte, Thomas Holt, Norma Husnick, Walter Katolic, Judith Kócinski, Denise Kolosky, Kristina Koutsoudes, Olympia Koutsoudes, Frederick McCarthy, Bruce McGloan, Patricia McGloan, Stephen McNulty, Chritina Mentis, Connie Mentis, Olga Moniodes, Margaret Perkins, Barbara Perrigina, Michael Previte, Sandra Ramondi, Carolyn Ritter; Jim Saturno, David Scharba, Clay Seman, Gail Sherman, Lorraine Sherman, Gerald Sovinski, Diane Staples, Nicholas Taylor, Kathy Theodorakos, Merryl Trader, Ralph Vurgich, Cheryl Zabowski, Edward Zabowski, Markos Zerefos.

PASKA ORDER FORM – ORDER BY APRIL 21

_____ Small Round (\$8) _____ Large Round (\$12) _____ Butter Lamb (\$5)

Name _____

() With Raisins

() Without Raisins

**Please give to Father Stephen this slip with payment
Paskas will be delivered for pickup Sunday, April 28**

OUR HOLY WEEK AND PASKA SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 28 – Palm Sunday

8:30 AM – Confessions
9:15 AM – Hours
9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy for the Faithful
Coffee Hour – Easter Egg Hunt
5:00 PM – Lenten Vespers

Holy and Great Monday – April 29

Sts. Peter and Paul
7:00 AM – Matins
6:00 PM – Presanctified Liturgy

Holy and Great Tuesday – April 30

Sts. Peter and Paul
7:00 AM – Matins
6:00 PM – Presanctified Liturgy

Holy and Great Wednesday – May 1

Sts. Peter and Paul
7:00 AM – Matins
8:00 AM – Presanctified Liturgy
St. Nicholas – Dover, DE
2:00 PM – Anointing of the Sick
Sts. Peter and Paul
7:00 PM – Anointing of the Sick

Holy and Great Thursday – May 2

7:00 AM – Matins
7:30 AM – Vespers/Liturgy of St. Basil
6:00 PM – 12 Gospels

Holy and Great Friday – May 3

Saints Peter and Paul
8:00 AM – Royal Hours
Holy Trinity – Whaleyville, MD
1:00 PM – Vespers/Shroud
St. Nicholas – Dover, DE
4:00 PM – Vespers/Shroud
Sts. Peter and Paul
7:00 PM – Vespers/Shroud
9:00 PM – Jerusalem Matins

Holy & Great Saturday – May 4

Saints Peter and Paul
8:00 AM – Vesper/Liturgy St. Basil
Holy Trinity - Whaleyville
4:00 PM – Service at the Tomb -
Resurrection Matins Liturgy
Bless Baskets
Sts. Peter and Paul
11:00 PM – Service at the Tomb
Resurrection Matins

Sunday, May 5

Resurrection of Our Lord
12 Midnite – Divine Liturgy
Bless Baskets – Coffee Hour
St. Nicholas
8:00 AM – Resurrection Matins
Divine Liturgy – Bless Baskets
Saints Peter and Paul
10:00 AM Pro Liturgy – Communion
Agape Vespers
Bless Baskets – Coffee Hour

~ : ~ **WHAT MAKES GOD ANGRY?** ~ : ~

What was Jesus like? The Gospels portray Him as someone with incredible patience and control. Even in the face of senseless questioning, ridicule and verbal abuse, Christ projected a calm and level demeanor.

There was one incident, however, where Jesus reacted with anger and righteous indignation. While visiting the Temple in Jerusalem during a Passover celebration, our Lord was scandalized to see merchants and vendors doing business on sacred ground. Quickly fashioning a whip of some cords, Jesus overturned their tables and angrily drove them out of the Temple, proclaiming: ***“Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s House a house of merchandise!”*** (John 2:16)

This event gives us some insight into what God DOES NOT want to see in our behavior. Greed and avarice are definitely not Christian qualities and characteristics! Christ’s confrontation with the money changers is one of many times that He expressed His disapproval of those who were driven by material profit and monetary gain. On the contrary, Jesus constantly reminded His followers that it would be meaningless to ***“gain the whole world and still suffer the loss of their own soul.”***

From this Temple incident, we also may draw the conclusion that we incur the wrath of our Heavenly Father when we lose sight of the true purpose and direction the Church should be taking. The Church as a BUILDING must be a place of PRAYER. The Church as an INSTITUTION must always reflect an attitude of prayerful holiness and sanctity as she leads her membership on a spiritual journey. Our ultimate destination is of course, the Kingdom of Heaven.