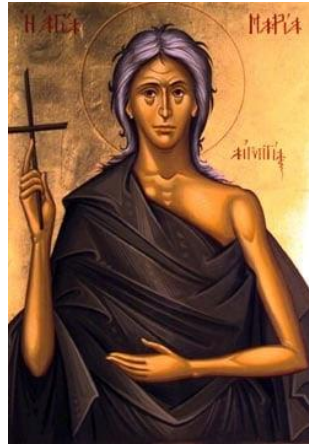




Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
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News & Announcements
April 21, 2024

5th Sunday of Lent - Saint Mary of Egypt

Κυριακή 5η Νηστειών – Οσίας Μητρος ημών Μαρίας της Αιγυπτίας



[The Holy Hieromartyr Januarius and Those With Him](#) 4/21/2024

Our Holy Father Maximian, Patriarch of Constantinople 4/21/2024

Theodore the Holy Martyr & his mother Philippa of Perge 4/21/2024

[Alexandra the Martyr](#) 4/21/2024

Anastasios the Monk of Sinai 4/21/2024

Beuno, Abbot of Clynnog 4/21/2024

Morning Matins 9:00 am

Morning Great Doxology starts at 9:45 am

Morning Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m

Greek & English is Used at All Services

Χρησιμοποιουμε Ελληνικά και Αγγλικά σε καθε Ακολουθία

The Sunday Epistle Reading

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:11-14

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Σὺ Κύριε, φυλάξαις ἡμᾶς καὶ διατηρήσαις ἡμᾶς.
Στίχ. Σῶσον με, Κύριε, ὅτι ἐκλέλοιπεν ὄσιος.

Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Επιστολῆς Παυλοῦ τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα 9:11-14

Ἀδελφοί, Χριστὸς δὲ παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, διὰ τῆς μείζονος καὶ τελειότερας σκηνῆς, οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν, οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως, οὐδὲ δι' αἵματος τράγων καὶ μόσχων, διὰ δὲ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος εἰσῆλθεν ἐφάπαξ εἰς τὰ ἅγια, αἰωνίαν λύτρωσιν εὐράμενος. Εἰ γὰρ τὸ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων, καὶ σποδὸς δαμάλεως ῥαντίζουσα τοὺς κεκοινωμένους, ἀγιάζει πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς καθαρότητα, πόσω μᾶλλον τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν ἅμωμον τῷ θεῷ, καθαρῶς τὴν συνείδησιν ὑμῶν ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων, εἰς τὸ λατρεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι

The Gospel According to Mark 10:32-45

At that time, Jesus took his twelve disciples, and he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Μάρκον Ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα 10:32-45

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητάς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν, ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι καὶ γραμματεῦσι, καὶ κατακρινούσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἐμπαίξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστήσεται. Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὃ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμεν ποιήσης ἡμῖν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί θέλετε ποιῆσαί με ὑμῖν; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δὸς ἡμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἷς ἐξ εὐωνύμων σου καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δυνάμεθα. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸ μὲν ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε· τὸ δὲ καθίσει ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἠτοίμασται. Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς λέγει αὐτοῖς· οἶδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν· οὐχ οὕτω δὲ ἔσται ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' ὅς ἐὰν θέλη γενέσθαι μέγας ἐν ὑμῖν, ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, καὶ ὅς ἐὰν θέλη ὑμῶν γενέσθαι πρῶτος, ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος· καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθε διακονηθῆναι, ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι, καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.

Memorial:

3 years – Socrates Gerondelis

Mary of Egypt

The primary source of information on Saint Mary of Egypt is the *Vita* written of her by [Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem](#) (634–638).^[3] Most of the information in this section is taken from this source.

Mary of Egypt, also known as Maria Aegyptiaca, was born somewhere in the [Province of Egypt](#), and at the age of twelve ran away from her parents to the city of [Alexandria](#). There, she lived an extremely dissolute life.^[4] In her *Vita* it states that she often refused the money offered for her sexual favors, as she was driven "by an insatiable and an irrepressible passion", and that she mainly lived by begging, supplemented by [spinning flax](#).

After seventeen years of this lifestyle, she traveled to [Jerusalem](#) for the [Great Feasts](#) of the [Exaltation of the Holy Cross](#). She undertook the journey as a sort of "anti-pilgrimage", stating that she hoped to find in the pilgrim crowds at Jerusalem even more partners to sate her lust. She paid for her passage by offering sexual favors to other [pilgrims](#), and she briefly continued her habitual lifestyle in Jerusalem. Her *Vita* relates that when she tried to enter the [Church of the Holy Sepulchre](#) for the celebrations, she was barred by an unseen force. Realizing this was because of her impurity, she was struck with remorse, and upon seeing an [icon](#) of the [Theotokos](#) (the [Virgin Mary](#)) outside the church, she prayed for forgiveness and promised to give up the world (i.e., become an [ascetic](#)). She attempted again to enter the church, and this time was able to go in. After venerating the [relic](#) of the [True Cross](#), she returned to the icon to give thanks, and heard a voice telling her, "If you cross the Jordan, you will find glorious rest." She immediately went to the [monastery](#) of Saint [John the Baptist](#) on the banks of the [River Jordan](#), where she received [absolution](#) and afterwards [Holy Communion](#). The next morning, she crossed the Jordan eastwards and retired to the desert to live the rest of her life as a [hermit](#) in penitence. She took with her only three loaves of bread she had bought, and once she had eaten these, lived only on what she could find in the wilderness.^[5]

Approximately one year before her death, she recounted her life to [Zosimas of Palestine](#),^[6] who encountered her in the desert. When he unexpectedly met her in the desert, she was completely naked and almost unrecognizable as human. She asked Zosimas to toss her his [mantle](#) to cover herself with, and then she narrated her life's story to him. She asked him to meet her at the banks of the Jordan on [Holy Thursday](#) of the following year, and to bring her Holy Communion. When he fulfilled her wish, she crossed the river to get to him by walking on the water, and received Holy Communion, telling him to meet her again in the desert the following Lent.

The next year, Zosimas went to the same spot where he first met her, some twenty days' journey from his monastery. There, he found her lying dead; an inscription written in the sand next to her head stated that she had died the very night he had given her Communion, her [incorrupt](#) body miraculously transported to that spot. He buried her body with the assistance of a passing [lion](#). On returning to his monastery, he related her life story to the other brethren, and it was preserved among them as [oral tradition](#) until it was written down by Sophronius.

Date of death^[edit]

There is disagreement among various sources regarding the dates of Mary's life. Some scholars doubt her existence, on the grounds of the similarity of her *Vita* to the stories of other "desert mothers": "[I]t is impossible to provide a chronology for the life of Mary, or even to establish her historicity."^[7] The dates given above correspond to those in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. The [Bollandists](#) place her death in 421, or 530 (see *Prolog from Ohrid*, 1 April). The only clue given in her *Vita* is the fact that the day of her repose was 1 April, which is stated to be [Holy Thursday](#), meaning that [Easter](#) fell on 4 April that year.

Veneration^[edit]

Iconography^[edit]

In [iconography](#), Mary of Egypt is depicted as a deeply tanned, emaciated old woman with unkempt gray hair, either naked and covered by her long hair or by the mantle she borrowed from Zosimas. She is often shown with the three loaves of bread she bought before her final journey into the desert.



Today's Coffee Hour 4/21
AHEPA Chapter #277

Today's Scheduled Narthex Greeters for 4/21

Wes Plat
James Branson

Our Volunteer Chantors

Peter Marinos
Nicholas Georgiou

Our Volunteer Choir Director

Panos Messis

Our Volunteer Organist

Eleni Christakos



Services of this Week:

April 24 – Wednesday
Pre-Sanctified Before Holy Week – 6:00 pm

April 27 – Saturday of Lazarus –
Great Doxology & Youth Family Choir Divine Liturgy - 10:00 am.
Family Breakfast for
Family Palm Cross Making for Palm Sunday

Ακολουθίες της Εβδομάδας:

Τεταρτη, 24 Απριλιου
Προηγιασμενη πριν της Μεγαλης Εβδομαδας – 6 μμ

27 Απριλιου – Σαββατο του Λαζαρου
Δοξολογια και Θεια Λειτουργια απο Χωροδιας Παιδιον – 10:00 πμ
Πρωινο για τα Παιδια και τους Γονεις
για να φτιαξουμε μετα Σταυρουλακα για την Κυριακη των Βαιων

GREAT LENT AND HOLY WEEK 2024 (March 18 – May 4) FASTING GUIDE



“O Lord and Master
of my life,
Take from me the spirit
of sloth, despair,
lust of power
and idle talk;

But give rather the spirit of chastity,
humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.

Yea, O Lord and King,
grant me to see my own transgressions
and not to judge my brother, for blessed
art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.”

This year, our journey through the Lenten fast to Pascha begins at Forgiveness Vespers on Sunday, Mar 17TH

The guidelines in this post are general. Fasting is a spiritual discipline that should be practiced with the oversight and direction of your spiritual father. If you have any specific questions about how the fasting discipline applies to you, you should consult your spiritual

The Lenten fasting discipline commences after Forgiveness Vespers on March 17 and concludes with the breaking of the fast at Pascha on May 5th. In general, the fasting rules during Great Lent and Holy Week are as follows:

WEEKDAYS (Monday – Friday) are observed as *Strict Fast Days*. On these days we abstain from meat, dairy, fish with backbones, fowl, alcoholic beverages, and oil.

WEEKENDS (Saturday and Sunday) are observed as *Wine and Oil Days*. On these days the fast is relaxed to permit alcoholic beverages and olive and other vegetable oils.

In addition, two special feastdays that fall during this period – **Annunciation (March 25)** and **Palm Sunday (April 28, this year)** – are kept as *Fish, Wine, and Oil Days*. On these days the fast is relaxed to permit fish with backbones, in addition to alcoholic beverages and oil.

There are certain days of the Holy Week cycle that have special fasting rules.

- **Great and Holy Thursday (May 2, this year)** is observed as a *Wine and Oil Day* due to the commemoration of the institution of the Eucharist.
- **Great and Holy Saturday (May 4, this year)** is observed as a *Strict Fast Day* – the only Saturday of the year kept as a strict fast; however, wine (but not oil) is permitted.

Additional Notes:

1. Meals for the fast should follow the dietary restrictions and be cooked simply. Portions should be smaller than usual.
2. Fasting on the weekdays of the first week of Great Lent is especially severe. The strictest observance would be to take only two meals during this week – one on Wednesday evening and one on Friday evening after the services scheduled for those nights – keeping Clean Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday as absolute fasts (i.e., no food whatsoever). For many this is impracticable. A good starting place to work towards the strict observance is to keep the first day of Great Lent, Clean Monday, as an absolute fast and to limit meals on the other days.
3. It is a pious practice to observe Great and Holy Friday as an absolute fast. If one does not have the strength to do this, it is good to abstain from food until after venerating the epitaphios (winding sheet) during Vespers on this day.
4. If you have a medical condition that requires you to relax the fasting guidelines, then do so.
5. **Before you attempt to strictly follow the fasting guidelines, consult with Fr. Stavroforos.** It is very easy to lose sight of the fact that fasting is a means to an end (that is, our salvation) and not an end in itself.
6. Generally speaking, children and elderly people are allowed to relax the fast under the guidance of their spiritual father.

FASTING TO RECEIVE COMMUNION AT A PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY

7. A special feature of the Liturgy of the Presanctified is that it is celebrated in the evening in connection with Vespers. The early Christians preparing to receive Communion at the Liturgy of the Presanctified fasted the whole day from morning till evening. Today complete fasting is prescribed starting from noon, so that after twelve o'clock we have nothing to eat or drink until after the evening Liturgy.



Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm on March 20, 27, April 3,10,17,24.

As we already have seen, the eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Orthodox Church on lenten weekdays. In order for the faithful to sustain their lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Orthodox Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

On all days of the holy fast of Lent, except on the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and the holy day of the Annunciation, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is to be served (Canon 52, Quinisext, 692).

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified."

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served on Wednesday and Friday evenings, although some churches may celebrate it only on one of these days. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. The faithful who are unable to make the effort of total fasting because of weakness or work, however, normally eat a light lenten meal in the early morning.

During the psalms of Vespers, the presanctified gifts are prepared for communion. They are transferred from the altar table where they have been reserved since the Divine Liturgy, and are placed on the table of oblation. After the evening hymn, the Old Testament scriptures of Genesis and Proverbs are read, between which the celebrant blesses the kneeling congregation with a lighted candle and the words: "The Light of Christ illumines all," indicating that all wisdom is given by Christ in the Church through the scriptures and sacraments. This blessing was originally directed primarily to the catechumens—those preparing to be baptized on Easter—who attended the service only to the time of the communion of the faithful.

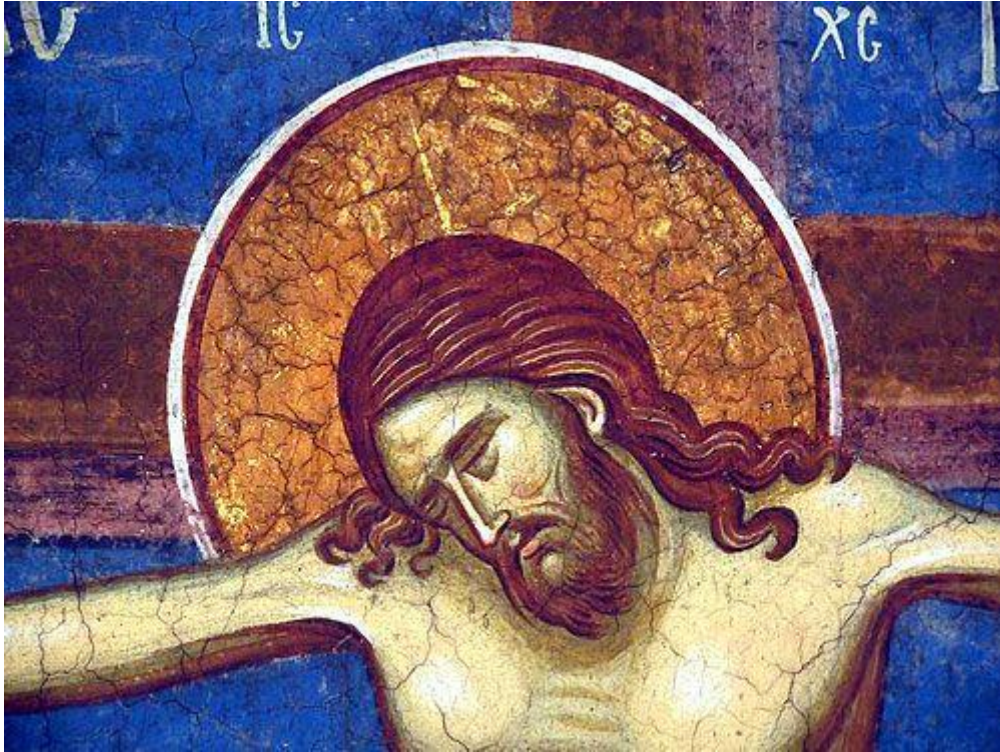
After the readings, the evening Psalm 141 is solemnly sung once again with the offering of incense. Then, after the litanies of intercession and those at which the catechumens were dismissed in former days, the presanctified eucharistic gifts are brought to the altar in a solemn, silent procession. The song of the entrance calls the faithful to communion.

Now the heavenly powers [i.e., the angels] do minister invisibly with us. For behold the King of Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice, all fulfilled, is ushered in.

Let us with faith and love draw near that we may be partakers of everlasting life. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

After the litany and prayers, the Our Father is sung and the faithful receive Holy Communion to the chanting of the verse from Psalm 34: "O taste and see how good is the Lord. Alleluia." The post-communion hymns are sung and the faithful depart with a prayer to God who "has brought us to these all-holy days for the cleansing of carnal passions," that he will bless us "to fight the good fight, to accomplish the course of the fast, and to attain unto and to adore the holy resurrection" of Christ.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is traditionally considered to be the work of the sixth-century pope, Saint Gregory of Rome. The present service, however, is obviously the inspired liturgical creation of Christian Byzantium.



Holy Week at Saint Barbara 2024

Sunday, April 28 Morning - Palm Sunday - 9:00 am

Sunday, April 28 Evening - 1st Bridegroom Service - 6:00 pm

Monday, April 29 Evening - 2nd Bridegroom Service - 6:00 pm

Tuesday, April 30 Evening - 3rd Bridegroom Service - 6:00 pm

Wednesday, May 1 Afternoon - Service of Holy Unction - 2:00 pm

Wednesday, May 1 Evening - Service of the Bridegroom - 6:00 pm

Thursday, May 2 Morning - Vespers & Liturgy of St. Basil- 9:00 am

Thursday, May 2 Evening - The Holy Passion Service - 6:00 pm

Friday, May 3 Morning - Royal Hours - 9:00 am

Friday, May 5 Afternoon - Descent from the Cross - 3:00 pm

Friday, May 3 Evening - Lamentation Service - 6:00 pm

Saturday Morning, May 4 - Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil 9:00 am

Saturday Evening, May 4 - Matins and Resurrection Service 11:00 pm

Sunday Morning, May 5 – Vespers of Agape 11:00 am

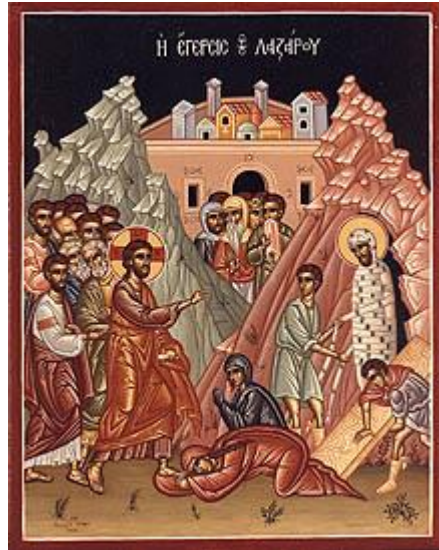


Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα στην Αγία Βαρβαρα 2024

- 28 Απριλίου – Κυριακή Βαιων Πρωι – 9:00 πμ
28 Απριλίου – Κυριακή Βραδυ Του Νυμφιου – 6:00 μμ
29 Απριλίου – Δευτερα Βραδυ Του Νυμφιου – 6:00 μμ
30 Απριλίου – Τριτη Βραδυ Τροπαριο της Κασσιανης – 6:00 μμ
1 Μαιου – Απογευμα – Μυστηριον του Ευχελαιου – 2:00 μμ
1 Μαου – Βραδυ – Του Νυμφιου και Μυρομα – 6:00 μμ
2 Μαιου – Πευπη Πρωι – Θεια Λειτουργια Μ. Βασιλειου – 9:00 πμ
2 Μαιου – Πευπη Βραδυ – Τα 12 Ευαγγελια – 6:00 μμ
3 Μαιου – Παρασκευη Πρωι – Μεγ. Βασιλικες Ωρες – 9:00 πμ
3 Μαιου – Παρασκευη Απογευμα – Αποκαθηλωση – 3:00 μμ
3 Μαιου – Παρασκευη Βραδυ – Επιταφιος Θρηνος – 6:00 μμ
4 Μαιου – Σαββατο Πρωι – Θ. Λειτουργια Μ. Βασιλειου – 9:00 πμ
4 Μαιου – Σαββατο Βραδυ – Η Ανασταση του Κυριου – 11:00 μμ
5 Μαιου – Κυριακη Πρωι – Εσπερινος της Αγαπης – 11:00 πμ

Daily Observances of Holy Week

+ *Fr. George Mastrontons*



Saturday Morning of St. Lazarus

”In Remembrance of a Pledge of Resurrection”

(Saturday before Palm Sunday; the service consists of Matins [Morning Prayers] and the Divine Liturgy.)

On this day, the rising from the dead of St. Lazarus, the righteous friend of Christ, is celebrated. Holy Week begins with the phrase: *"Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany..."* (John 12:1) His arrival coincided with the Jewish Passover. It started on the 15th of the month of Nisan in commemoration of the freeing of the Hebrew people, under the leadership of Moses, from the slavery of the Egyptians by the miraculous act of God. The Church relates preparation and redemption to the events of this week.

Six days before the Passover, a feast was given for Christ in Bethany of Judea, where Christ had stopped on His way to Jerusalem. Lazarus, His friend, and his sisters were present. A short time earlier, Christ had raised Lazarus from the dead, thereby gaining the respect and faith of the people, but also the hatred of the fanatics. The Church names this day the "Saturday of Lazarus" in remembrance of the resurrection of Lazarus and its promise of universal resurrection for all men. The Church connects this

celebration, by anticipation, with the Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem: "We carry the Symbols of victory and cry Hosanna in the highest.



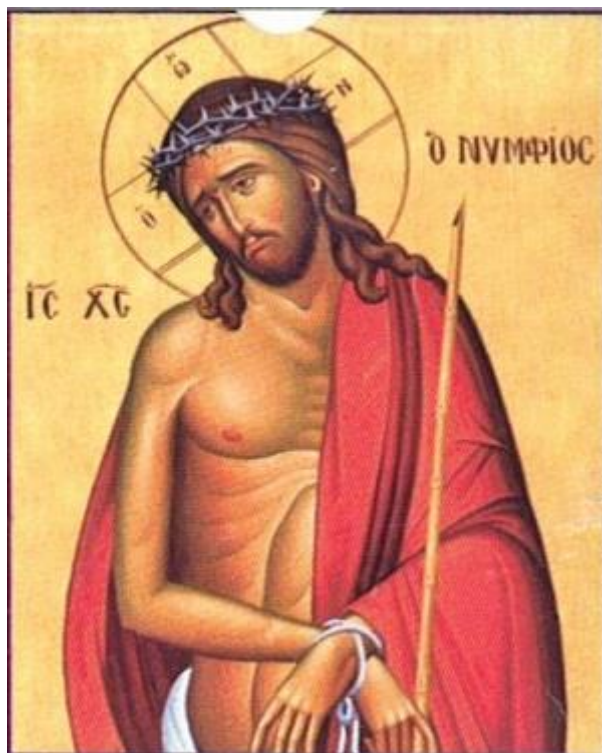
Palm Sunday Morning

"Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord..."

(Palm Sunday service is held in the morning and consists of Matins [Morning Prayers] and the Divine Liturgy.)

Palm Sunday celebrates the glorious and brilliant feast of the Entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. Zechariah had prophesied the entrance of the Messiah into Jerusalem, saying: *"Rejoice greatly...O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King comes unto Thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."* (Zech. 9:9) The contemporary Jews associated this prophecy with the expected Messiah. This action of Christ testifies to His nature as Savior, but with the definite declaration that His Kingdom was not of this world. The news that Christ was in Bethany provoked a general enthusiasm of acceptance, but also of indignation among the High Priests, who had decided to kill Christ. The main road leading to Jerusalem was covered with palm trees. The multitudes, with palm branches in their hands, spread their cloaks on the road as a show of respect, crying out, *"Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."* All the actions and words of the people and of Christ had a Messianic meaning readily recognized by the Jews of that time. As usual, Christ went immediately to the Temple, where He prayed and taught. That evening He departed for Bethany.

A custom of distributing branches of palms to the people in the Church prevails to this day, commemorating the victory of Christ against the evil powers.



Behold the Bridegroom Cometh in the Midst of the Night..."

(The service is MATINS³ [Morning Prayers] of Great Monday and is sung by anticipation on Palm Sunday evening.)

Monday of Holy Week (sung by anticipation, now on Palm Sunday Evening) commemorates the blessed and noble Joseph and the fig tree which was cursed and withered by the Lord. The withering of the fig tree was a miracle of special symbolism, since the tree had leaves, but no fruit. It is symbolic of the many people who claim ethical and religious identity, but who in reality have empty lives that yield no fruit. This was also the case with some of the Pharisees of that period. Jesus cursed the tree: "*May no fruit ever come from you again!*" (Matt. 21:19) The reference to the story of the virtuous Joseph of the Old Testament (Genesis 37-41) is made only for contrast, since the life of Joseph was a model of propriety and sincere observance of ethical principles.

On this evening, we begin with the Hymn of the Bridegroom, "Behold the Bridegroom comes in the midst of the night...beware, therefore, O my soul, lest thou be borne down in sleep...and lest thou be

shut out from the Kingdom..." The canticle hymn also has a symbolic exhortation: "I see thy bridal hall adorned, O my Savior, and I have no wedding garment...O giver of Light, make radiant the vesture of my soul and save me." At this time, the solemn procession of the Icon of Christ-Bridegroom takes place around the church. The people, anticipating the sufferings of Christ, sing: "Thy sublime sufferings, on this day, shine upon the world as a light of salvation."

The Gospel reading during this service is Matthew 21:18-43. It mentions that *"the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'"* (v. 23) They sought to have Christ accuse Himself in answering this question.

Great Holy Tuesday Evening

"When he came to himself...he came to his father..."

(The service is Matins of Wednesday morning sung by anticipation on Tuesday evening.)

On Wednesday of Holy Week (sung by anticipation, now on Tuesday evening), it has been ordained by the Holy Fathers of the Church that commemoration should be made of the anointing of Christ with myrrh by the woman in the house of Simon, the leper, in Bethany. Repentance was the mission of the prophets. It would be an apt one-word title for the Bible, because *"repentance"* was the mission of our Lord. This woman who demonstrated her repentance and her warm faith toward our Lord still presents to us the aroma of her virtue for imitation today.

On this evening is sung the beautiful "Hymn of Cassiane," probably a work of Patriarch Photius. It begins: "The woman who had fallen into many sins recognized thy Godhead, O Lord; Woe to me, saith she; receive the sources of my tears, O Thou who doth gather into clouds the water of the sea. Who can trace out the multitude of my sins and the abysses of my misdeeds? "O Thou whose mercy is unbounded."

Great Holy Wednesday afternoon

"Anointing him sick with oil in the name of the Lord..."

(The Mysterion of Unction)

The sacred ceremony of the Mysterion of the Holy Unction takes place on this Wednesday evening, following an old custom. It is the evening of repentance, confession, and the remission of sins by the Lord, preparing the faithful to receive Holy Communion, usually the next day, Holy Thursday morning. Holy Unction is the Mysterion for cleansing sins and renewing the body and the spirit of the faithful. Holy Unction is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church, and it has its origin in the practice of the early Church as recorded in the Epistle of James (5:14-15). At the end of the service, the priest anoints the people with Holy Oil, the visible carrier of the Grace of God.

Great Holy Wednesday Evening

"Let no fear separate you from Me..."

(The service is Matins of Thursday morning sung by anticipation, on Wednesday evening.)

The Orthros of Thursday morning is sung by anticipation, on Wednesday evening. In many Orthodox churches, however, this service is sung at its designated Thursday morning time, before the Vespers and Divine Liturgy. "On Thursday in Holy Week (now Wednesday evening or Thursday morning) the Holy Fathers, who had well-ordained things, handed down to us successively from the Holy Apostles and the Sacred Gospels to celebrate four Events: the washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the Holy Eucharist, the Marvelous Prayer, the betrayal."

Great Holy Thursday Morning



"Do this in remembrance of Me..."

(The service is the Vespers and Divine Liturgy of Thursday evening which is sung in the morning by anticipation.)

Jesus drew His last breath of freedom on this Thursday night. Christ knew all the incidents which were about to take place and called to Him His Apostles in order to institute the Holy Eucharist for them and for the Church forever. At the end of March, with the full moon as a brilliant lantern in the sky and the weather mild, the people in Jerusalem enjoyed the beginning of spring. In this atmosphere, Christ presented Bread and Wine as the Elements of His Very Body and His Very Blood; they are the Precious Gifts which have been left as His perpetual Presence in the Church. The institution of the Holy Eucharist and its re-enactment through the centuries, both as a sacrifice and sacred ceremony (Mysterion), is the life-giving remembrance which, along with the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, constitutes the basis of salvation for the Christian.

Then followed the incidents of the dramatic closing moments of Christ's life. After the washing of His Apostles' feet, He pointed out the betrayer, inaugurated the Eucharist, and pronounced the new commandment of love for one another. He spoke to them words of comfort, promising the descent of the Holy Spirit to complete man's union with Christ. His departure, Christ said, would bring to them and the world joy. Christ took His Apostles out in the mild night where He could see face-to-face His co-workers in the bright light of the full moon. In this spiritual mood and physical setting, Jesus withdrew to pray. After this agony of the "*bloody sweat*" came the kiss of Judas and His arrest. He thus became the source of spiritual and physical freedom for mankind.

Great Holy Thursday Evening



"We worship Thy passion, O Christ..."

(The service of the HOLY PASSION of our Lord Jesus Christ. The service is Matins of Friday morning sung by anticipation, on Thursday evening.)

Good Friday celebrates the holy, saving, and awesome Passion of Christ. To take away our sins, Christ willingly endured spitting, scourging, buffeting, scorn, mocking, and purple robe; the reed, sponge, vinegar, nails, spear, and above all, the Cross and Death. The confession from the cross of the penitent thief, crucified with Christ, is celebrated. This service is long, but its content is dramatic and deeply moving for the devout Christian. Participation in the prayers and the historical sequence of the events, as related in the Gospels and hymns, provides a vivid foundation for the great events yet to come.

The readings relate the last instructions of Christ to His disciples, the prophecy of the drama of the Cross, the dramatic prayer of Christ and His new commandment. The day should be devoted to reading the "Gospel of the Testament" of Christ which He left for all men. The Church services during Holy Week re-enact the events of this Gospel.

After the reading of the fifth Gospel comes the procession with the Crucifix around the church, while the priest chants the 15th antiphon: "Today is hung upon the Tree, He Who did hang the land in the midst of the waters. A Crown of thorns crowns Him Who is King of Angels. He is wrapped about with the purple of mockery Who wrapped the Heavens with clouds. He received buffetings Who freed Adam in Jordan. He was transfixed with nails Who is the Bridegroom of the Church. He was pierced with a spear Who is the Son of the Virgin. We worship Thy Passion, O Christ. Show also unto us thy glorious Resurrection."

During the Procession, the faithful Christian kneels and prays for his spiritual welfare, imitating the thief on the Cross who confessed his faith and devotion to Christ. He then approaches and reverently kisses the Crucifix.

Good Friday Morning

"They cast lots upon my vesture..."

According to the Hebrew custom, the "Royal Hours," four in number, are read at this time. These services consist of hymns, psalms, and readings from the Old and New Testaments, all related prophetically and ethically to the Person of Christ. In some churches, the "Hours" are read in the afternoon, before the Vesper services.

Good Friday Afternoon



"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do..."

(The service is Vespers sung on Friday afternoon.)

The Vespers of Friday afternoon are a continuation of the Royal Hours. During this service, the removal of the Body of Christ from the Cross is commemorated with a sense of mourning for the terrible events which took place. Once more, excerpts from the Old Testament are read together with hymns, and again the entire story is related, followed by the removal from the Cross and the wrapping of the Body of Christ with a white sheet as did Joseph of Arimathea. Apostle Paul, interpreting the dreadful event, exhorts the Church: *"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...we preach Christ crucified...the power of God and the wisdom of God."* (1 Cor. 1: 18f.)

As the priest reads the Gospel, *"and taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in a white cloth,"* he removes the Body of Christ from the Cross, wraps It in a white cloth, and takes It to the altar. The priest then chants a mourning hymn: *"When Joseph of Arimathea took Thee, the life of all, down from the Tree dead, he buried Thee with myrrh and fine linen...rejoicing. Glory to Thy humiliation, O Master, who clothest Thyself with light as it were with a garment."* The priest then carries the cloth on which the Body of Christ is painted or embroidered around the church before placing It inside the Sepulcher, a carved bier which symbolizes the Tomb of Christ. We are reminded that during Christ's entombment, He descends into Hades to free the dead of the ages before His Incarnation.

Good Friday Evening - The Lamentation

"Do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves..."

(The service is Matins of Saturday morning sung by anticipation, on Friday evening.)

It consists of psalms, hymns, and readings dealing with the death of Christ, in contrast to His divinity, and in expectation of His Resurrection. One of the hymns relates: "He who holds all things is raised up on the Cross and all creation laments to see Him hang naked on the Tree." The thoughtful and well-written *Odes*, sung by the choir, compare the Compassion of God and the cruelty of man, the Might of God and the moral weakness of man. The *Odes* picture all Creation trembling when witnessing its Creator hung by His own creatures: "Creation was moved...with intense astonishment when it beheld Thee hung in Golgotha." The *Odes* remind us of the vision of Isaiah, who saw Christ, "the unwaning light of the manifestation," and cried aloud, "The dead indeed shall arise and all those on earth shall rejoice." During this service, the Body of Christ is carried in procession around the church. In some parishes, the entire flower-bedecked Sepulcher, symbolizing the Tomb, is carried in the procession.

The entire congregation joins in singing the three parts of the "Hymns of Praise" (there are approximately 300 hymns, but only a few are sung). After these hymns are sung, the priest sprinkles the Sepulcher and the whole congregation with fragrant water. There is a simultaneous praise of both the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ with their purpose of the redemption of man. We no longer lament the sufferings of the Crucified One; we now lament chiefly for our own sins because we are far from God. So these services should have a rather personal meaning of repentance and of strong faith in God.

Great Holy Saturday Morning

"Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth..."

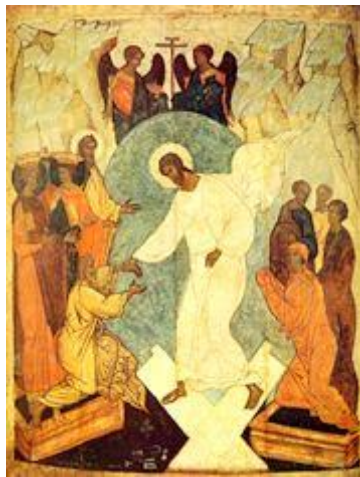
(The service is Vespers and Divine Liturgy of Saturday evening sung by anticipation, on Saturday morning.)

Psalms are read and Resurrection hymns are sung which tell of Christ's descent into Hades. "Today Hades cried out groaning" is the hymn's description of the resurrection of Adam and the conquering of death. Thus this day's celebration is called "First Resurrection." Most of the readings of this day are from the Old Testament on the prophecies and promise of the conquering of death. On this day, the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil is officiated. Apostle Paul exhorts the faithful: "*We were buried, therefore, with him by baptism unto death, so we, too, might walk in newness of life.*" (Romans 6:4)

After the reading of the Epistle, the priest follows the custom of tossing of laurel, saying: "Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth: for Thou shall take all heathen to Thine inheritance." The Cherubic hymn of this day is: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence and stand with fear and trembling...", a thoughtful hymn of adoration and exaltation. The Divine Liturgy ends with the Communion Hymn: "So the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and He is risen to save us."

The readings are from Romans 6:3-11 and Matthew 28:1-20.

The Holy Sunday of Easter Midnight Service



(The service is Matins and Divine Liturgy of Sunday morning sung Saturday midnight. With this service, the Pentecostarion starts (50 days services).

On Easter Sunday (Saturday midnight), the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated. Before midnight, the Odes of Lamentation of the previous day are repeated. The Orthros of the Resurrection begins in complete darkness. The priest takes light from the vigil light and gives it to the faithful, who are holding candles. The priest sings: "Come ye and receive light from the unwaning life, and glorify Christ, who arose from the dead," and all the people join him in singing this hymn again and again. From this moment, every Christian holds the Easter candle as a symbol of his vivid, deep faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as Savior. In many churches, the priest leads the people outside the church, where he reads the Gospel which refers to the Angel's statement: "He is Risen; He is not here." (Mark 16:1-8)

Then comes the breathless moment as the people wait for the priest to start the hymn of Resurrection, which they join him in singing, repeatedly: "Christ has Risen from the dead, by death trampling upon Death, and has bestowed life upon those in the tombs." From this moment, the entire service takes on a joyous Easter atmosphere. The hymns of the *Odes and Praises* of Resurrection which follow are of superb meaning and expression. The people confess, "It is the Day of Resurrection, let us be glorious, let us embrace one another and speak to those that hate us; let us forgive all things and so let us cry, Christ has arisen from the dead." By this hymn, they admit that love of one's fellowman is the solid foundation of the faith in the Resurrection of Christ.

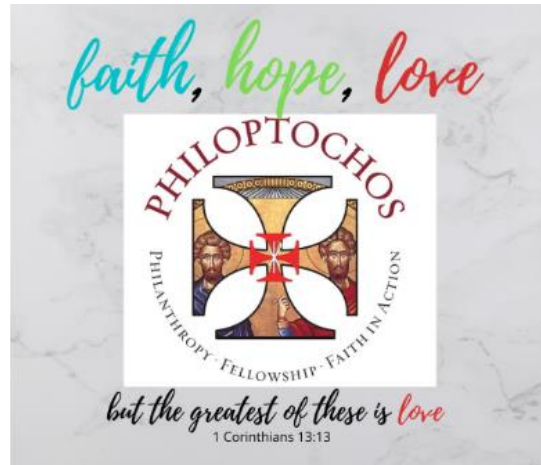
The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is then officiated. At the end of the Liturgy, a part of the marvelous festival sermon of St. Chrysostom is read, which calls upon the people to "Take part in this fair and radiant festival. Let no one be fearful of death, for the death of the Savior has set us free...O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is Thy victory? Christ is Risen and Thou art overthrown. To Him be glory and power from all ages to all ages."

Easter Sunday Afternoon Vespers

"Peace be unto you..."

Easter Sunday afternoon, the faithful gather once more for prayer with lighted candles. All sing the hymn, "Christ is Risen from the Dead." The people greet one another joyously, saying: "Christ is Risen," the Easter salutation which is answered, "Truly He is Risen." They sing, "The dark shadows of the Law have passed away by the coming of grace," and standing in exaltation, they exclaim, "Who is so great a God as our God?"

The Gospel according to John (20:19-25) is read in various languages, proclaiming the Good News of Resurrection all over the universe without discrimination. The fruit of faith in the Resurrection of the Lord is love in His Name; therefore, this day is called "Sunday of Agape" (love feast), a day dedicated to Christian principles, especially to forgiveness and charity. At this time, Christians seek to end misunderstanding and arguments among those with whom they may be at odds. Apostle Paul firmly interprets the Resurrection of Christ, saying: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." (1 Cor. 15:14) The Church also states in its Creed, "The Third day He rose again."



PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING TODAY AFTER CHURCH

Hello Ladies,

Our next Philoptochos General Membership Meeting will be on Sunday, April 21, after church services. Please plan to attend as the Pastry Sale for our St. Barbara Greek Festival on May 18 and 19 will be the main topic.

Thank you to everyone for your help in March. The month was a whirlwind! On the heels of a wonderful Membership Social, we turned right around and hosted a delicious Cheesefare Luncheon for our parishioners. These events, as well as others, will be recapped at our meeting.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I look forward to seeing you on April 21!

In Christ,

Betsy Xenakis

HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES



FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY:

Saturday of Lazarus Youth and Parents Divine Liturgy

Contact Costa Constantinou to be Part of the Parents Youth Choir

mrmusicteacher@gmail.com

Saturday of Lazarus Palm Cross Making

After Services for the Saturday of Lazarus

Contact: TBA

A Holy Week Reader

Contact: Pete Marinos pnm1@yahoo.com

An Epitaphio Decorator

After the Royal Hours on Good Friday

Contact: TBA

A Parent with Child who Receives the Body of Christ from the Cross.
In the middle of the 3:00 service of Good Friday
Contact: TBA

Participating in the Choir
Contact: Panos Messis panosmessis@gmail.com

**Participating in the Reading of the Gospel in a Foreign Language at
the Agape Service**
Contact: Larry Odzak larryodzak@gmail.com

Narthex Scheduling
Contact: TBA

Being a Pall-bearer that carries the Epitaphio
Contact: TBA

Being a Myrrh-bearer at our Lord's Tomb
Contact: TBA

Being an Altar Boy
Contact: James Dasher misterdasher@gmail.com

Dyeing and Wrapping Red Easter Eggs
Contact: TBA

**Contributing a food item for the International Easter Pot Luck After
the Midnight Service**
***All Covered Dishes Should be taken directly to the Church
Hall. Everyone is invited
to bring a covered dish.***
Contact: TBA