

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

Epistle Lesson: St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9

BRETHREN, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel Lesson: Gospel According to St. John 12:1-18

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazaros was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazaros was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

In Our Hearts and In Our Prayers. This week we offer up heartfelt prayer for the health and salvation of the following persons who are struggling with illness or difficult life situations. Please remember them in your prayers. They are: Brigette Barbas, Frances Batsakis, George Baryames (E. Lansing), Nancy Brieghner (California), Niki and Alexander Chibucos (Chicago), Helen Dalbo, Eugene Dalbo (Detroit), Barbara and Gerasimos Dennon, Andrew Drelles, Kalliope Drudge (Frankfort), Martha and David Ealy, James Elliot (W.VA), Peter Farougi, Rebekah Foster (France), Bud Fromholz, Irene and Elias Govatos (Florida), Elizabeth Husby, Alexandra Karagiannis (Chicago), Helen Knapp, Stephanie Long, Pamela and Leon Lysaght (Plymouth), Elan Nichols (Lansing), Rebekah Olechnowicz (Ypsilanti), Angeliki O'Non, Constantinos Pappas (New York), Diane and Fred Pascaris (Detroit), Jerry Slomba (Flint), Christina and Katerina Stavros, Gabriel Underwood (Florida), Judy Weston, Catherine Cavis (Port Huron), George, Konstantinos, Mary, Anastasios, Nicholas, George, Catherine, Zefira, and Argyris (Port Huron).

Coloured eggs for distribution on Pascha night can be donated by individuals any time up to the services. We ask that they be coloured the traditional red and left in their cartons when brought to the church so that they may be easily stored in our refrigerator until needed. Eggs are being coordinated by Mrs. Karen Kain.

A Pot-Luck Dinner will take place immediately following the Agape Vespers on Pascha day. Everyone is welcomed to bring a dish to pass at this dinner. Coordination of the dinner is through Mr. John Batsakis. If you will be bringing something, please contact John at 360-0304 or via e-mail at bats14@chartermi.net so that he can insure that we have a sufficient mix of types of foods.



TRAVERSE CITY ORTHODOX MISSION

A Ministry of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit

Meeting at 1030 Hastings St., Traverse City, Michigan

www.tcorthodoxchurch.org

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Sunday, 20 April 2008

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✠ PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS ✠

Sunday 20 April

Palm Sunday.

Fast Day—Fish, Wine and Oil Allowed

9 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos

11 AM Church School

11:15 AM Memorial Svc for +Sofia Pontsa (Toronto) 8th Year Anniversary

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour hosted by Kiki and Tom Sebestyen

Church Maintenance Duty

5:30 PM Orthros of Holy Monday Bridegroom Matins (Νυμφίος Ορθρός)

Monday 21 April

Great and Holy Monday.

Strict Fast Day

5:30 PM Orthros of Holy Tuesday Bridegroom Matins (Νυμφίος Ορθρός)

Tuesday 22 April

Great and Holy Tuesday.

Strict Fast Day

5:30 PM Orthros of Holy Wednesday Bridegroom Matins (Νυμφίος Ορθρός)

Wednesday 23 April

Great and Holy Wednesday. (Note: Feast of St. George Translated to Monday of Bright Week)

Strict Fast Day

5:30 PM Orthros of Holy Thursday Holy Unction Service (Αγιον Ευχέλαιον)

Thursday 24 April

Great and Holy Thursday.

Strict Fast Day

9 AM Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil

5:30 PM Orthros of Holy Friday and the Commemoration of the Lord's Passion

Friday 25 April	Great and Holy Friday. Strict Fast Day 8 AM Royal Hours 11 AM Decoration of the Tomb 3:30 PM Vespers and the Αποκαθελουσις 6:30 PM Orthros of Holy Saturday--Lamentation Service
Saturday 26 April	Great and Holy Saturday. Strict Fast Day 10 AM Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil—First Announcement of the Resurrection 11:30 PM Mesonyktikos and Outdoor Procession for the Proclamation of the Resurrection.
Sunday 27 April	Great and Holy PASCHA; The Passover of the Lord; The Feast of Feasts; The Resurrection of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ from the Dead. 12:01 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos 2 AM Blessing of Pascha Baskets 11 AM Vespers of Agape followed by Pascha Pot-Luck Community Luncheon

Palm Sunday. “Blessed is He that comes...”: this is the feast of Christ the King—welcomed by children at His entry into Jerusalem, and to be welcomed likewise by each one of us into our own heart. ‘Blessed is He that comes...’—that comes not so much out of the past as out of our future: for on Palm Sunday we welcome not only the Lord who entered Jerusalem long ago, riding on a donkey, but the Lord who comes again in power and great glory, as King of the Future Age. Palms and branches are blessed after the Gospel at Mattins, and held with lighted candles during the rest of the service.

Great and Holy Monday. Orthros is sung on Sunday evening by anticipation. Today we commemorate the Patriarch Joseph, whose innocent sufferings (Genesis chapters 37 and 39-40) prefigure the Passion of Christ. Also we commemorate the barren fig tree cursed by our Lord (Matthew 21:18-20)—a symbol of judgement that will befall all those who show no fruits of repentance; a symbol, more specifically, of the unbelieving Jewish synagogue.

Great and Holy Tuesday. Orthros is sung on Monday evening by anticipation. Today the liturgical texts refer chiefly to the parable of the Ten Virgins, which forms the general theme of these three days. They refer also to the parable of the Talents that comes immediately after it (Matthew 25:14-30). Both these are interpreted as parables of judgement.

Great and Holy Wednesday. Orthros is sung on Tuesday evening by anticipation. Today we commemorate the woman that was a sinner, who anointed Christ’s feet as He sat in the house of Simon. In the hymnography of the day, the account in Matthew 26:6-13 is combined with that in Luke 7:36-50. A second theme is the agreement made by Judas with the Jewish authorities; the repentance of the sinful harlot is contrasted with the tragic fall of the chosen disciple. The Triodion makes it clear that Judas perished, not simply because he betrayed the Master, but because having fallen into the sin of betrayal, he then refused to believe in the possibility of forgiveness: ‘In misery he lost his life, preferring a noose rather than repentance.’ If we deplore the actions of Judas, we do so not with vindictive self-righteousness but conscious always of our own guilt: ‘Deliver our souls, O Lord, from the condemnation that was his.’ In

general, all the passages in the Triodion that seem to be directed against the Jews should be understood in this same way. When the Triodion denounces those who rejected Christ and delivered Him to death, we recognize that these words apply not only to others, but to ourselves: for have we not betrayed the Saviour many times in our hearts and crucified Him afresh?

On the evening of Holy Wednesday the Mystery of Anointing of the Sick (Holy Unction) is celebrated in church and all are anointed, whether physically ill or not; for there is no sharp line of demarcation between bodily and spiritual sicknesses, and this Mystery confers not only bodily healing but forgiveness of sins, thus serving as a preparation for the reception of Holy Communion on the next day. As unction is a Mystery of the Church we ask that only Orthodox Christians come forward to receive the anointing.

Great and Holy Thursday. On this day four events are celebrated: the washing of the disciples’ feet, the institution of the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and the betrayal of Christ by Judas.

Great and Holy Friday. On this day we celebrate the sufferings of Christ: the mockery, the crown of thorns, the scourging, the nails, the thirst, the vinegar and gall, the cry of desolation, and all that the Saviour endured on the Cross; also the confession of the Good Thief. At the same time, the Passion is not separated from the Resurrection; even on this day of our Lord’s deepest self-abasement, we look forward also to the revelation of His eternal glory. Friday Orthros is celebrated on Thursday evening by anticipation.

On Friday morning we celebrate the Office of the Hours followed by the Vespers. At the vespers service we commemorate the removal of Christ from the Cross and His being wrapped in the winding sheet by SS. Joseph of Arimathea and Nikodemos.

Great and Holy Saturday. On this day we celebrate the burial of Christ and His descent into Hell. At Mattins, held on Friday evening by anticipation, we make a procession with the epitaphios (burial shroud) of Christ. At the end of the service, all go with the epitaphios around the outside of the church, singing ‘Holy God...’, exactly as it would be done at a funeral. And yet this is not, in fact, a funeral procession at all. God had died on the Cross, and yet He is not dead. He who died, the Word of God, is the Life Himself, holy and immortal; and our procession through the night signifies that He is now proceeding through the darkness of Hell, announcing to Adam and to all the dead His coming Resurrection, in which they are also called to share.

In the morning of Holy Saturday we celebrate the vespers and the Liturgy of St. Basil and make the first announcement of the Holy Resurrection. We spend the balance of the day in anticipation of the great event that will be commemorated that evening at midnight; the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

A Note About Transport. With fuel well over \$3.50 per gallon (and climbing) and many of our parishioners commuting from distances in excess of 15 miles to get to church, there is a considerable financial hardship tied to church attendance. Especially during a week such as this where we have services every day and sometimes twice or three times a day—coming to church will cost you. These services are all important—and it is important that we do our best to get to them. However, there is a financial reality in which each of us finds ourselves. If you find that you cannot afford to make the trip to church as frequently as you’d like, you are encouraged to car pool with someone from your area. Contact Fr. Iakovos to identify someone coming from your area. If that is impractical for you, you are encouraged to watch the services over the internet from St. Nicholas Church in Ann Arbor; these are live streamed at www.stnickaa.org.