

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone.....570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky
Reader Hours: Edward Pierson

Sunday, April 16, 2023
Choir Director: Wash King
Reader Epistle: Michael Ropitsky

**HOLY PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR
JESUS CHRIST**

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!
Christos Anesti Alithos Anesti
El Messieh Kahm! Hakken Kahm!
Cristos a Inviat! Adevarat a Inviat!

Services:

Sunday, April 16 8:30 AM – Holy Pascha Divine Liturgy followed by the
 Blessing of Baskets & Pascha Luncheon
Saturday, April 22 5:00 PM – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sunday, April 23 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy (Antipascha) & Fellowship
 Adult Class "Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians" Chapters 10 & 11 Session
Saturday, April 29 5:00 PM – Great Vespers, Parastas, & Confessions
Sunday, April 30 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

We WELCOME all our visitors today! We want to let you know that we are so glad you came to pray with us. Please come again; join us after the Divine Liturgy in the Church Hall for Coffee Hour.

If you do not have a home church, we invite you to become a part of our Church Family.

***Please Note:* Only those Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves may approach the Chalice and receive Holy Communion.**

Prayer List:

Fr. James Weremedic, Matushka Lisa Weremedic
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Andrew Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Danielle Bogosh, Elizabeth Brennan, Stephanie Chmel, Ilene Devine, Kimberly Evetushick, Nadine Fegley, Julia Forte, Michael & Julia Harahus, Karen & Rose Harkins, Nancy King, Michael Kulick, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey, Dorothy & Joseph Macenka, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pierson, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Helen Sheers, Olga Sidoriak, Mary Simone, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, George Yurchak, & Marie Yurchak.

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772. Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

Candles (April 9)

Eternal Lamp... For the Health of **David Ogozalik** offered by Julia Forte

Candles (April 16)

7-day Vigils-Altar... For the Health of **Monica Bazewicz** offered by Julia Forte

Altar Candles... In memory of **John Sidoriak, Sr.** offered by Eleanor Sidoriak

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Theresa Wyshosky** offered by Julia Forte

Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Aunt Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod... In memory of **Patricia Batdorf** offered by Millie O'Shura

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Family Members

April Birthdays:

4- Elizabeth Warcholak, 10- Jackie Babinetz, 14- Marie Yurchak, 16- Mary Evetushick,

17- Julie McHugh, 17- Anastasia Babinetz, 22- Martha Teno, 22- Amanda Skripnek,

23- Anne Ostrosky, 24- Dennis Vavra

Financials 2/26/23: Operating Acct: Weekly Envelopes \$963 Non-Envelopes \$155

Holy Days \$541 Candles \$127 Donations \$25 Pascha Sales \$ 60

Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Thank you!

THE DIVINE LITURGY

The sermon announces the imminent beginning of the Divine Liturgy. The altar table is fully laden with the divine food: the Body and Blood of the risen and glorified Christ. No one is to go away hungry. The service books are very specific in saying that only he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ eats the true Pascha. The Divine Liturgy, therefore, normally follows immediately after paschal Matins. Foods from which the faithful have been asked to abstain during the Lenten journey are blessed and eaten only after the Divine Liturgy.

If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King
Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King

OUR SAVIOR HAS CONQUERED DEATH

Who is the greatest conqueror that ever lived? Some may say Caesar, Alexander the Great or Napoleon. But all are wrong. These men weren't even worthy to be called privates when compared to the greatest of all conquerors. For the greatest of all is Death.



Death carries a black flag and he takes no prisoners. If God did not continuously create new life, this world of ours would long ago have become a lifeless planet. Generals and kings sometimes fall back and surrender some of their gains; but not so with Death. What a cruel conqueror he is! His palace is a huge space filled with dust and bones.

But the Resurrection of Christ tells us that this greatest of conquerors has himself been defeated. Death has been slain. Death has been trampled down, as we sing this day. Death has been defeated. Life has come to the land of the dead.

This is the message of the FEAST OF FEASTS. This is the news of Pascha. This is precisely the core of the Christian religion; this is precisely why it has prevailed through the centuries.

The Orthodox icon of the Resurrection profoundly tells the meaning of this victory of Christ over man's archenemy. The icon does not simply portray a Risen Figure at the empty grave; rather it shows Him entering into the Enemy Camp, the very abode of the dead. There he smashes the chains and locks of the entombed. He makes His way to the very pit of Hell, and once there grasps the first-fruits of Death, Adam and Eve, freeing them from the curse of sin.

We all have to die, to be sure, but the sting of death has been removed. We die in the knowledge that we shall rise again; we die with the words of Christ resounding in our minds: "Because I live, you shall live also."

HOLY PASCHA — THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

[Beginning of the Pentecostarion]. Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene and Chionia, in Illyria (304). Martyrs Leonidas, Chariessa, Nice (Nika, Victoria), Galina, Kalista (Kalisa), Nunechia, Basilissa, Theodora, and Irene, of Corinth (258). Monastic Martyr Christopher of Dionysiou (Mt. Athos—1818).

Acts 1:1-8 (Epistle)

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

John 1:1-17 (Gospel)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"

And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith.

The resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth.

The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being celebrated. It is God's free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church's liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore (Irmos 8, Paschal Canon).

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Pascha 2023

To the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,
My Beloved Children in the Lord,
Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen!

“Let us purify our senses and we shall see Christ shining in the unapproachable light of the Resurrection. We shall clearly hear him say: ‘Rejoice.’” (Paschal Canon, Ode One)

When the myrrh-bearing women came to the tomb, they were met by the words of an angel: “He is not here. He is risen.” Mary Magdalene and the other women in turn brought this message to the apostles. And down through the centuries, that message has been passed on by their successors, even to us: the Gospel of the crucified and risen Lord.

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”—this is the heart of the Gospel, and the Resurrection of Christ is the irruption of the heavenly kingdom into our fallen reality, the demonstration and proof that the kingdom is at hand. The Resurrection of Christ is not a distant and ancient event. It is a new reality to which we in the Church already have access.

For the message of Christ’s Rising is not merely passed down from generation to generation, like other teachings or stories. It is passed down through experience: in baptism, we die and rise with Christ. In chrismation, we receive his Spirit and share in his anointing. In the Eucharist, we eat his deified Body and Blood, offered for us on the Cross and taken up into heaven through the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. Through the mysteries, we enter ourselves into a personal and eternal relationship with the Risen Lord.

This is why, in Saint John Damascene’s Paschal canon, the figure who announces the Resurrection to the believer is none other than Christ himself—“we shall see Christ shining in the unapproachable light of the Resurrection. We shall clearly hear him say: ‘Rejoice.’” He has chosen mortal ministers to serve at his mysteries and offer them on our behalf, but through the mysteries—if we repent, “purify[ing] our senses” of sinful preoccupations with worldly things—then we will encounter Christ himself.

And this encounter fills us with joy, because it is a foretaste of the kingdom, where the righteous will always delight in the clear light of the Resurrection, where the Resurrection’s transformative power will be known in full, where Christ will be seen, not as in a mirror darkly, but face to face.

Christ is risen, beloved children! Death, sin, hell, the world, the devil—these are all fleeing in defeat. Christ himself goes before us into the kingdom, the new heaven and the new earth, and we sing the song of victory: “Christ is risen!” May we, all of us, keep that anthem in our hearts all the yearlong, and throughout the years, knowing that Christ’s Resurrection is the conquest of all trouble and sorrow, the end of the rule of Satan and sin and brokenness, and the beginning of a new reality that knows no end: the kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, lasting unto all ages.

Greeting you with the unfailing, invincible, and unending joy of the Lord’s Pascha,

I remain,
Yours in Christ,
+ TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



The Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia

April 5, 2023

*Christ is risen from the dead
trampling down death by death
And upon those in the tombs
bestowing life.
We celebrate the abolition of
death,
The destruction of Hades and
the first fruit of everlasting life.
And as we leap with joy, we
praise the Cause of these good
gifts,
The God of our fathers who
alone is blessed and most
glorified.*



Beloved of God,

Christ is Risen! Truly, He is Risen! El Messieh kahm! Hakken kahm! Khristos voskrese! Voistinu voskrese!

Let God, arise and let His enemies be scattered! As smoke vanishes so let them vanish! So the sinner will perish before the face of God, but let the righteous be glad! This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Let us embrace one another and forgive all things for the sake of Christ's Holy Resurrection.

Christos anesti! Alithos anesti! Cristos vaskres! Vaistinu vaskres! Cristos a inviat! Adevarat a inviat!

Blessed Feast! Your unworthy father in Christ,

+ Mark

+ Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania



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"Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee." Augustine

BLESSING OF BASKETS

A colorful Easter custom observed in the Eastern Orthodox Church is the blessing of Easter baskets. Each family prepares a basket which contains all the essentials for a family repast (special golden-colored bread, decorated Easter eggs, ham, sausage, butter and special foods such as an egg cheese) which is brought to the church for the Saturday midnight service. A lighted candle is placed in each basket. At the conclusion of the service and after the blessing ceremony, the baskets are taken home where the families gather for an early morning meal. These baskets represent a humble offering brought to the Resurrected Christ.

EASTER EGGS

A custom that is sometimes observed among those of the Orthodox faith is the presenting of red colored eggs to friends while giving Easter greetings. This custom had its beginning with Mary Magdalene. After the Ascension of Christ, she went to the Emperor of Rome and greeted him with, "Christ is Risen," as she gave him a red egg. She then began preaching Christianity to him. The egg is symbolic of the grave and life renewed by breaking out of it. The red symbolizes the blood of Christ redeeming the world, represented by the egg, and our regeneration through the blood shed for us by Christ. The egg itself is a symbol of the Resurrection—while being dormant it contains a new life sealed within it.

