

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

Sunday, April 24, 2022

Choir Director: Wash King

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Christ is Risen!

Indeed, He is Risen!

Services:

- | | |
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| Sunday, April 24 | 8:30 AM – Matins, Holy Pascha Divine Liturgy followed by
Blessing of Baskets with fellowship |
| Saturday, April 30 | 4:00 PM – Great Vespers |
| Sunday, May 1 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Fellowship – St. Thomas Sunday |

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:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Andrew Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Karen Harkins, Nancy King, Michael Kulick, John & Olga Kushnir, MaryAnn & Paul Macenka, Mary Maholick, Anna Marie Mantey, Mildred O'Shura, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidoriak, Mary Simone, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Officer Derrick Underkoffler, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & 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.

April Birthdays:

4- Elizabeth Warcholak, 10- Jackie Babinetz, 14- Marie Yurchak, 16- Mary Evetushick, 17- Julie McHugh, 22- Martha Teno (96), 23- Anne Ostrosky, 24- Dennis Vavra

Candles (April 24)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the Health of **Jack O'Shura** offered by Millie O'Shura

Altar Candles... In memory of **Aunt Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Vigil Crosses... For the Health of **Matushka Lovey Ropitsky** offered Ted Bogosh

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... For the Health of **Matushka Lisa Weremedic** offered by Ted Bogosh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Anastasia Scarloss** offered by Michael & Natalie Bolinski

Financials 4/17/22:

Operating Acct: Candles 98 - Altar Candles 50 - Offerings 340 - Non-Envelope 150

Holy Days 165 – Paska 60 - Donations 20 = Total \$883.00.

Easter Flowers 40

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

Fellowship Hour Hosts

April 24 Paska - Blessing of Baskets and Fellowship

May 1 John Evetushick

May 22 Lynn Sharpe

May 8 Helen King

May 29 Lena Marie Berezniak

May 15 Weremedics

There is a sign-up sheet for **Coffee Hour** in the vestibule if you would like to host.

We express our deepest sympathy to the family of John King

Who fell asleep in the Lord 4/10/2022 Memory Eternal!

Coming Event – Chinese Auction -- Sunday – May 15, 2022

Donations and gifts are needed. Please bring to church or call Helen King for pickup at
570-645-9484

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

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.

WANTED – LENTEN RECIPES

Barbara Birosik is willing to collect and organize Lenten recipes in order to share and preserve our Lenten traditions. The recipes should be given to Barbara Birosik or be put on the Candle stand. Please include the donor's name and telephone number in case there are questions. The recipes will be typed and shared so there is a record of what we can cook for our Lenten meals. The tried, and true recipes we have used over the years will be greatly appreciated.

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

In the eighth ode of the Resurrection Canon, written by St. John of Damascus, we find this descriptive reference to Pascha: "THIS IS THE HOLY AND CHOSEN DAY; THE FIRST OF SABBATHS; LORD AND KING; THE FEAST OF FEASTS; AND THE TRIUMPH OF TRIUMPHS. LET US BLESS CHRIST ON THIS DAY FOREVER." Certainly we all can agree on the monumental importance of today. Everything pales in comparison to Christ's rising from the dead. No triumph is greater. No Sabbath is sweeter. No day is as sacred and blessed. No celebration carries the same impact or magnitude.

Words cannot properly describe the feeling in our hearts and souls on this "FEAST OF FEASTS." How does one verbalize the surge of emotion released when the Paschal Troparion is sung for the first time? What can be said for the inner joy that exists for us when we view our church brilliantly illumined at



Resurrection Matins – a sharp contrast to the solemn darkness so prevalent in our Lenten liturgical life?

For the next 40 days, we will greet each other repeatedly with the most meaningful of Christian phrases: CHRIST IS RISEN. The message of Pascha, however, is not merely seasonal. We are constantly overshadowed by the light of the Resurrection. All of our daily actions are tempered by the victory of our Saviour over death and the grave. We, who profess to be His devoted followers, are heartened by His blessed promise to us: I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. HE, WHO BELIEVES IN ME, WILL NEVER DIE."

Let us boldly proclaim the words of St. John Chrysostom as we celebrate Pascha: "CHRIST IS RISEN, AND DEATH IS ABOLISHED. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THE DEMONS ARE CAST DOWN. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THE ANGELS REJOICE. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND LIFE IS FREED!"

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

REJOICE, FOR HE IS RISEN!



April 24, 2022

*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!*

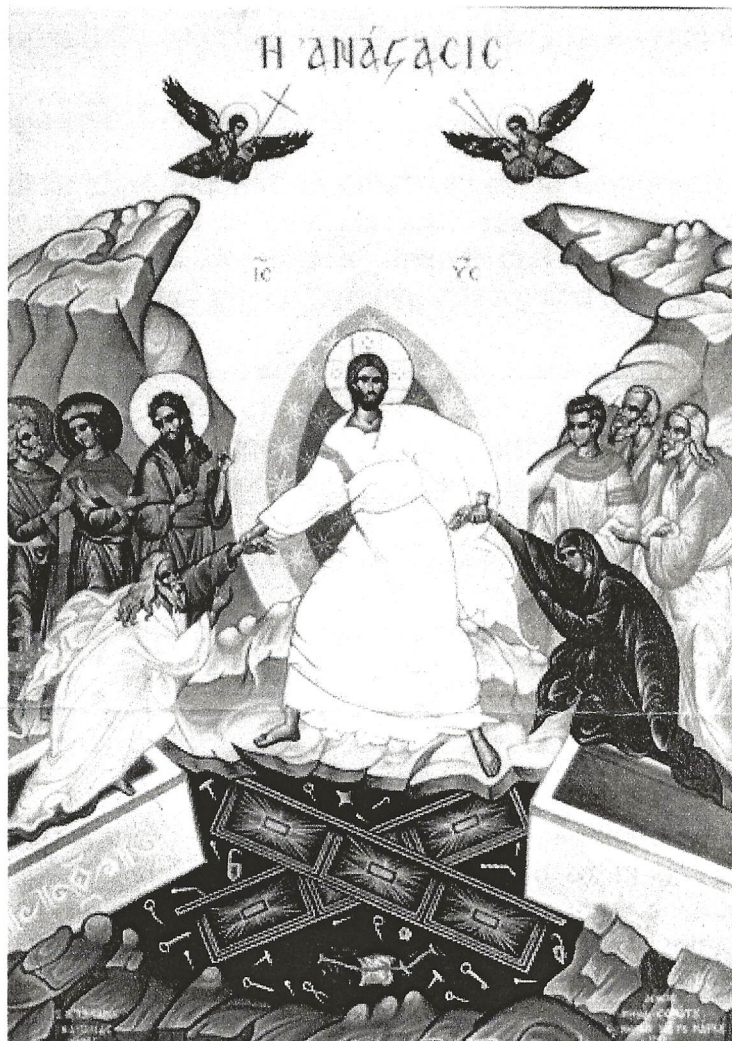
*Let God, arise and let His
enemies be scattered! As smoke
vanishes so let them vanish! So the
sinner will perish before the face of
God, but let the righteous be glad! This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice
and be glad in it! Let us embrace one another and forgive all things for the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

HOLY PASCHA — THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. [Beginning of the Pentecostarion]. Martyr Savva Stratelates (“the General”) of Rome, and 70 soldiers with him (272). Ven. Savva and Aleksy the Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—13th c.). Martyrs Valentine and Pasikrates in Moesia, Bulgaria (228). Martyrs Eusebius, Neon, Leontius, Longinus, and others, at Nicomedia (303). Ven. Thomas the Fool, of Syria (6th c.). St. Elizabeth the Wonderworker of Constantinople (6th-8th c.). Ss. Iorest (1678) and Savva Brancovici (1683), Metropolitans of Ardeal and Confessors (Romania). Hieromartyr and Confessor Elijah (Ilie) the Wallachian (1657).

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.

HOLY PASCHA: The Resurrection of Our Lord

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.

(Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. Saint Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain (I Cor. 15:14). Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut (John 20: 19). Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did (Acts 2-4): “. . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39).

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.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

In His death and resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet (I Cor. 15:24-26).

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5: 12)

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

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).

PREPARATION

Twelve weeks of preparation precede the “feast of feasts.” A long journey which includes five prelenten Sundays, six weeks of Great Lent and finally Holy Week is made. The journey moves from the self-willed exile of the prodigal son to the grace-filled entrance into the new Jerusalem, coming down as a bride beautifully adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2) Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and study are the means by which this long journey is made.

Focusing on the veneration of the Cross at its midpoint, the lenten voyage itself reveals that the joy of the resurrection is achieved only through the Cross. “Through the cross joy has come into all the world,” we sing in one paschal hymn. And in the paschal troparion, we repeat again and again that Christ has trampled down death—by death! Saint Paul writes that the name of Jesus is exalted above every name because He first emptied Himself, taking on the lowly form of a servant and being obedient even to death on the Cross (Phil. 2:5-11). The road to the celebration of the resurrection is the self-emptying crucifixion of Lent. Pascha is the passover from death to life.

Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ.

Today I arise with Thee in Thy resurrection.

Yesterday I was crucified with Thee:

Glorify me with Thee, O Savior, in Thy kingdom (Ode 3, Paschal Canon).

THE PROCESSION

The divine services of the night of Pascha commence near midnight of Holy Saturday. At the Ninth Ode of the Canon of Nocturn, the priest, already vested in his brightest robes, removes the Holy Shroud from the tomb and carries it to the altar table, where it remains until the leave-taking of Pascha. The faithful stand in darkness. Then, one by one, they light their candles from the candle held by the priest and form a great procession out of the church. Choir, servers, priest and people, led by the bearers of the cross, banners, icons and Gospel book, circle the church. The bells are rung incessantly and the angelic hymn of the resurrection is chanted.

The procession comes to a stop before the principal doors of the church. Before the closed doors the priest and the people sing the troparion of Pascha, “Christ is risen from the dead...”, many times. Even before

entering the church the priest and people exchange the paschal greeting: "Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!" This segment of the paschal services is extremely important. It preserves in the experience of the Church the primitive accounts of the resurrection of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. The angel rolled away the stone from the tomb not to let a biologically revived but physically entrapped Christ walk out, but to reveal that "He is not here; for He has risen, as He said" (Matt. 28:6).

In the paschal canon we sing:

Thou didst arise, O Christ, and yet the tomb remained sealed, as at Thy birth the Virgin's womb remained unharmed; and Thou has opened for us the gates of paradise (Ode 6).

Finally, the procession of light and song in the darkness of night, and the thunderous proclamation that, indeed, Christ is risen, fulfill the words of the Evangelist John: "The light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5).

The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is bathed in light and adorned with flowers. It is the heavenly bride and the symbol of the empty tomb:

Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise

Brighter than any royal chamber,

Thy tomb, O Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection (Paschal Hours).

MATINS

Matins commences immediately. The risen Christ is glorified in the singing of the beautiful canon of Saint John of Damascus. The paschal greeting is repeatedly exchanged. Near the end of Matins the paschal verses are sung. They relate the entire narrative of the Lord's resurrection. They conclude with the words calling us to actualize among each other the forgiveness freely given to all by God:

This is the day of resurrection.

Let us be illumined by the feast.

Let us embrace each other.

Let us call "brothers" even those who hate us,

And forgive all by the resurrection. . .

The sermon of Saint John Chrysostom is then read by the celebrant. The sermon was originally composed as a baptismal instruction. It is retained by the Church in the paschal services because everything about the night of Pascha recalls the Sacrament of Baptism: the language and general terminology of the liturgical texts, the specific hymns, the vestment color, the use of candles and the great procession itself. Now the sermon invites us to a great reaffirmation of our baptism: to union with Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion.

If any man is devout and loves God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. . . the table is fully laden; feast you all sumptuously. . . the calf is fatted, let no one go hungry away. . .

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.

THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha.

O Wisdom, Word and Power of God,

grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom

(Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).

The V. Rev. Paul Lazor

New York, 1977