

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

Choir Director: Wash King

Sunday, May 17, 2020

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman. Apostle Andronicus of the Seventy and his fellow-laborer, Junia. St. Euphrosyne (Princess Eudocia) of Moscow. Martyrs Solochon, Pamphamer, and Pamphalon, at Chalcedon. St. Stephen, Archbishop of Constantinople.

Prokeimenon – Tone 3 – Sing praises to our God, sing praises!

Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Christ is Risen!

Indeed, He is Risen!

Khristos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese! Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

El Messieh Kahm! Hakken Kahm! Cristo ha Resucitado! Verdaderamente ha Resucitado!

All liturgical services are cancelled until further notice!

This includes Divine Liturgy, Akathist, Vespers, Parastas, etc. and all meetings and events at the church are CANCELLED.

John 4:5-42 (Gospel)

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word.

Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

Messages from the OCA and Diocese:

On the [OCA Website](#) click on (May 3) Message from His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon for the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women. You can listen to the message, if it is hard for you to read it.

Then click on (May 1) [Holy Synod Issues Pastoral Letter](#) – at the bottom of the letter you can click on Download for the 3-page letter. Under the letter, click on the [Directives of the Holy Synod Toward Re-opening the Churches](#) – 29 pages.

On the [Diocese of Eastern PA Website](#) click on "Guidelines for Re-opening" at the top of the page. Scroll down to "Preparing for the Next Step in [Moving Beyond Coronavirus and Being Proactive](#)" -click on Archbishop Mark's message to read his message (6 pages). This was sent to all parishioners this week in place of the regular bulletin.

Scroll down and please read the following:

- ***New Federal Guidelines for Reopening** (18 pages)
- ***Calculations for Reopening** (1 page)
- ***CDC Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting** (3 pages)
- ***CDC Handwashing Fact Sheet** (1 page)

Please use this time to read the Scriptures, pray in your home and please pray for those on our prayer list.

Prayer List: HEAVENLY FATHER ... Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent your only begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit us and heal us, Your servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Son Jesus Christ; grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your word to pray for each other that we may be healed. You are the source of healing and to You, we give glory; to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Michael Birocik, James Blair, Terry Blair, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Jane Bubernak, Cecil Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Mary Evetushick, Irene David, Ilene Devine, Gloria Ferri, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, Dorothy Macenka, Helen Macenka, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Alexandra Miller, Courtney Miller, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Helen Scheese, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Helen Suda, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Nancy Vanno, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York.

Please contact Fr. James Weremedic with any emergencies or concerns at 570-645-2772.

Local On-line Services:

Go to the Diocese of Eastern PA website at the bottom of our church website.

At the top of the page – Click on Live Streaming

Scroll down to Livestream Calendar and Click on Service you want to watch

Christ the Saviour – Harrisburg, PA --- Readers Vespers – 5 PM

Sunday Typica Prayers – 9:30 AM

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church – Mechanicsburg, PA --- Vespers – 6 PM

Sunday Divine Liturgy – 9:30 AM

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Mogadore, OH – You Tube

Services every day of the week – Mon. to Fri. at 7:00 PM

Sat. Vespers- 5:00 PM, Sunday Divine Liturgy- 9:30 AM

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Thank you to everyone who donated elastic to Helen King. We have enough elastic for now.
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We want to thank everyone who sent sympathy cards, made telephone calls, and said prayers expressing condolences in memory of my brother, John Bluvas (in California), who fell asleep in the Lord on 04-11-2020.

God Bless You All,

Helen & Wash King

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Our sympathy is extended to the family of Archpriest Paul Lazor, who fell asleep in the Lord on 05-09-2020.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Matushka Irene (Papinskiak) Rachko, who fell asleep in the Lord on 04-26-2020. Archpriest John and Matushka Irene Rachko were married in St. Mary's Orthodox Church.
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**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**
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Financials May 1-7, 2020 Operating Acct: -Dues 0 – Candles 0 – Weekly 347 – Non-Env 0 – Holy Days 126 – Altar Candles 130 – Pascha Offerings 40 – Donations 50 = **Total \$ 693.00**
Building Fund 220- ... Charity Donation 0- .. Furnace Fund 2,000-.. Cemetery 128- .. Flowers 0 ... **Thank you.**

Please keep filling your church envelopes
May 1-7 income –\$693.00; May expenses - \$858.21

Donation for the Health of Joseph & Dorothy Macenka offered by Joseph & Regina Matis
Furnace Fund donation for the health of great nephew Keegan Wyshosky offered by Julia Forte

May Birthdays: 2- Lynn Sharpe, 17- Russell King, 17- Julia Forte, 21- Lindsey Ruch, 21- Gloria Ferri,
22- Andrew Miller 31- Marie Skripnek

May Wedding Anniversaries: 9–Richard and Julie McHugh, 16-V. Rev Paul & Matushka Lovey Ropitsky

May 17 – “IF ANYONE THIRSTS, COME UNTO ME AND DRINK”

“Thirst is a natural human experience. Simply stated, we could not survive for any length of time without a regular intake of liquids. It is not surprising, then, that Christ would draw an analogy between Himself and water, for indeed, He is our unquenchable source of life. What is surprising, however, is the method deployed by our Lord to accent this divine truth.

Much of today's Gospel on this, the Sunday of the SAMARITAN WOMAN, centers around what appears to be an innocent conversation between Christ and a stranger. What is intriguing about this dialogue is that Christ would engage in such a conversation with a woman (unheard of in those day) and a Samaritan, who were natural enemies of the Jews, in the first place! Their words begin with a discussion of a material nature: ‘Give me something to drink,’ asks our Lord. It leads to matters of enormous spiritual and theological significance. ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,’ He reminds the Samaritan Woman, ‘but whoever drinks of the waters that I shall give him will never thirst. For the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’ As their talk continues, Jesus ultimately reveals to her that He is the Messiah: the One Who can satisfy our every need.

The Gospel concludes, with a message from the townspeople to the Samaritan woman: ‘Now we believe, not because of what you have said, for we ourselves have heard Him.’ It is important that we realize that we must, of our own accord, come unto that ‘Living Water’ and drink! We must believe in Christ out of a personal, inner experience of faith. “

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey...USA

Home Work of the Church Reflections in Christ Fr. Lawrence Farley

April 20, 2020

How the Grinch Stole Pascha

The year 2020 will be remembered by Orthodox as the year without Pascha. At the beginning of the year, and even at the beginning of Great Lent, it hardly seemed possible. I remember the second Sunday of Great Lent here at St. Herman's. We had served the Liturgy of St. Basil and commemorated St. Gregory Palamas. We were looking forward to the coming Sunday when we would venerate the Cross, and I gave our little hand-cross into the care of one of our people asking her to decorate it with flowers as she did so beautifully last year. She accepted the cross and the assignment and I looked forward to receiving the decorated cross from her skillful young hands the next Saturday. Then a day or so later a letter came to all of us Canadian clergy from our bishop informing us that he very reluctantly was closing the churches at least until the end of the month. There would be no beautiful cross to venerate this year.

But we all still set our hearts on Pascha and looked forward to gathering again then, processing around the church with our candles, gathering at the front door at midnight and crying “Christ is risen!” and then feasting after Matins and the Liturgy in the church hall until the wee hours of the morning. Such optimism now seems hopelessly naïve. We imagined the Covid-19 storm would blow itself out in a week or two. At the time of writing, it seems as if the storm might last on into the summer. But on the Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas the thought of losing all of Lent was horrific. The thought of losing Pascha was unthinkable. How could we survive without it? I am not the only one to mourn 2020 as the year without Pascha. All over the world Orthodox are grieving and struggling to cope.

My wife, as usual in our house, found just the right words to describe the feeling. It was, she said, something like “How the Grinch Stole Pascha”—the Grinch being the faceless Covid-19 virus that stalks the land

like an invisible enemy. And hidden in that characterization is perhaps the Orthodox answer to our grief, a way of seeing our situation in its true light so that we can better cope and survive.

Let us return to the Grinch—not the 2000 film with the talented Jim Carrey, but the real Grinch—the animated short film voiced by the immortal Boris Karloff, created in 1966. In that story, the Grinch hated the annual celebration of Christmas with all its joyful noise, and he was determined to stop the whole thing. He decided therefore to steal Christmas from the inhabitants of Whoville who lived at the base of his mountain home. He disguised himself as Santa Claus and, with coerced help from his hapless dog Max, entered every home in Whoville and stole all their Christmas presents, their Christmas trees, their Christmas decorations, and their Christmas food. In the famous ending to the short tale, after his night of Grinchy work he ascended to the top of his mountain to dump all the stolen Christmas swag into the deep valley below. But before he did so, he waited gleefully to hear the mournful lamentation of the Who's down in Whoville below who, he felt sure, would all cry out in grief when they discovered that he had stolen Christmas from them.

Who can forget the ending? “The Grinch put a hand to his ear. And he did hear a sound rising over the snow. It started in low and it started to grow. But this sound wasn't sad. This sound sounded glad. Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small, was singing—without any presents at all. He hadn't stopped Christmas from coming—it came! Somehow or other, it came just the same.”

The Grinch puzzled and puzzled until his puzzler was sore. How could it be so? The answer, as the Grinch finally discovered, was contained within the song the Who's sung as they gathered in the public square: “Christmas Day is in our grasp, so long as we have hands to clasp.”

Dr. Seuss, that theologian of childhood's joy, gives us insight into our current situation, and a new way to understand our Paschal deprivation. Pascha in Orthodoxy is not dependent upon our assembled Eucharist and feasting any more than Christmas in Whoville was dependent upon the presents and the decorations. Pascha is the inextinguishable hope that Christ kindles in the hearts of His people, a hope that we who have been united with Him in His Church will finally share His triumph over death. Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.

And it is not as if Christians have never before been forced to cope with liturgical deprivation through extraordinary circumstances. I remember the story of some Orthodox Christians imprisoned for their faith and political dissent after 1949 in Romania. In one such prison in Jilava, the prisoners lived fifteen meters underground in dampness and darkness, the single window there sealed against light and fresh air. They were hungry, hemmed in, living in semi-darkness during the day and pitch blackness during the night, forty-five Orthodox men in the stench of mold, urine and excrement waiting in a tomb.

As Pascha approached, they were determined to keep Pascha. They calculated when the midnight hour would arrive because they remembered that the nearby train blew its whistle at 11:40 p.m. as it left the station. When midnight finally arrived, they all raised the cry, “Christ is risen!”, and led by the two deacons among them, sang Paschal Matins from memory at the top of their lungs. Outside their cell, the guards went crazy, running up and down and banging on the doors, yelling at them to be quiet. But nothing could quench their joy and stop their mouths, and all the Jilava prison rang with the hymns of the Resurrection. Circumstances prevented the prisoners from serving the Paschal Eucharist and keeping the feast as they had done in happier days. But no circumstances could separate them from Christ and from their Paschal hope.

That hope remains in our hearts as well, even as Christ's presence remains with us, whether or not we can gather together physically on Pascha night to serve the Eucharist and keep the Paschal feast. Christ remains in our midst, and we still have Him, because we still have each other. For now, we must meet together separately, and share the Paschal celebration virtually through our computer screens at home. Soon enough we will join together and clasp hands physically as well. For now, from our homes on Pascha night let us rejoice in our risen Lord. We Orthodox Who's, the tall and the small, will sing to the Lord this Pascha. Pascha is within our grasp, so long as we have hands to clasp. Covid-19 cannot grinchily steal Pascha from us. Somehow or other, it will come just the same.

By Fr. Lawrence Farley

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, Saint Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to Saint Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret." Saint Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber. For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." Saint Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. Saint Sebastian's servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized. Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to Saint Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me." The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage Saint Sebastian to persevere until the end.

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to Saint Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians and joined the confessors in Rome. At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and Saint Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. Saint Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized. In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from Saint Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of Saint Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for Saint Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. Saint Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days. After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. Saint Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?"

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).