

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

505 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, Pa. 18510

Fr. Nicholas Ferencz, Ph.D., pastor
Rectory: 570-344-5917
Cell: 724-953-6046

Hall - 570-344-1522
www.stnicholasorthodoxscranton.org
nferencz35@gmail.com

April 13, 2014

Palm (Flowery) Sunday

PARISH CALENDAR

- Sun., Apr. 13 **PALM (FLOWERY) SUNDAY**
9:00 AM Confessions
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – pp. 188-192
- Wed., Apr. 16 **GREAT WEDNESDAY**
5:30 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy & Holy
Mystery of the Anointing of the
Sick
- Thu., Apr. 17 **GREAT THURSDAY**
5:30 PM *Last Scheduled* Confessions
6:00 PM Divine Liturgy of the Last Supper.
Setting up the Tomb.
- Fri., Apr. 18 **GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY**
10:00 AM Matins of the 12 Gospels
7:00 PM Vespers and the Procession with
the Shroud
Vigil at the Tomb
- Sat., Apr. 19 **GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY**
8:00 PM Resurrection Matins
Blessing of Baskets
- Sun., Apr. 20 **PASCHA: THE RESURRECTION OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – pp. 193-196.
Blessing of Baskets
Easter Egg Hunt for the kiddies

Holy Mystery of Confession: The last scheduled Confession time before Pascha will be on Great and Holy Thursday (See Calendar above). If anyone cannot get to confession at the scheduled times, you are welcome to contact me for an appointment.

THE LENTEN FAST

FOR HOLY WEEK:

TRADITIONAL RULES call for STRICT FAST (no meat, dairy, wine or oil products) *every weekday* during the Holy Week, Monday through Saturday. Note that this is the only Saturday of the year on which oil is not permitted (which is why there is no mirovanije at Liturgy on Pascha).

DIOCESAN RULES require the following for Holy Week: Monday through Thursday, no meat. Great Friday and Holy Saturday, STRICT FAST.

FOOD BANK DURING GREAT LENT:

Please remember that we are also called to almsgiving during Lent: what we take from ourselves is to go to others in need. So:

The *Food Collection* in the hall ends *today*.

A *Special Collection* will taken at Divine Liturgy today.

Both collections will go to the local Food Bank, *Bread Basket of NEPA*. All are encouraged to be as generous as possible.

COMMUNION FASTING:

To receive the Holy Eucharist in the morning, fast from bed-time until we receive, as usual. To receive Holy Eucharist in the evening, fast for *at least 3 hours before the beginning of the service*. If possible, do not eat or drink after Lunch until you receive the Eucharist. Those who are under a doctor's care must follow the doctor's orders. Questions? See Fr. Nik.

PEOPLE STUFF

Please remember in your prayers:

Living: Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Mary Chupron. Susan Danchak. Ricky, Rick & Sarah. Michael Danchak. Fr. George Dursa. Jada Eiden. Benjamin Groves III. Robert & Eddie Hawley. Lorraine Kacaba. Anna Mae Kuklis. Dee Lositski. Peggy Majcher. Mildred Orzolek. Emma Sacco. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell. Marion Sosnowski. Jeff Thomas. William Thomas. Ann Marie Tighe. Fr. Donald Valasek. Gary Wassel. Julia Worobey.

At Home: Michael Andreosky. Elizabeth Basalyga. George & Anna Senich. Kathryn Stocoski.

Assisted Living Homes: Julie Kovacs. Julie Roberts.

Altar Vigil Candles: Memory of Nick & Agnes Towarnicki by Shimo family.

Eternal Light: Memory of Nick & Agnes Towarnicki by Shimo family.

Panachida: Memory of Nick & Agnes Towarnicki by Shimo family.

PARISH STUFF

Tomb Vigil Sign Up Sheet Folks are welcome to sign up to spend some time in prayer and meditation before the Tomb of Our Lord. The Sign-up Sheet is in the *Church Vestibule*.

Church School. Next scheduled classes are in May.

Pirohi Making & Sale: Once again, *Thanks & God Bless* all of you who worked so hard to make our winter/spring Pirohi Sales so successful! Many years!

Annual Easter Egg Hunt! The children of the parish are invited to the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday, April, 20, after Divine Liturgy. Sponsored by the Men's Club.

Spaghetti Dinner! Hosted by the Men's Club. Sunday, April 27, beginning at Noon. For tickets see a member of the Men's Club.

Donation List Updated - The List in the hall has the information that I have received to date. Please make sure you add anything else we have missed. We appreciate your help in this effort.

ACRY Meeting: Reorganize? Or Not? Sunday, May 4, after Divine Liturgy, there will be a meeting in

the hall. As you all know, the parish's ACRY chapter has been rather moribund for the past few years. This meeting is being called for all former, present, and potential members of the ACRY. All are asked to attend this very important, but brief meeting. There will be only one question on the agenda: Should the local chapter of the ACRY reorganize or should it officially disband? All are asked to carefully consider this question and respond at the meeting.

Camp Nazareth Family Day Raffle Tickets are now available for purchase. The main Prize is \$10,000 and the cost is \$20 per ticket. We have sold out our original allotment but getting more tickets. See Nick Polanichka if you want some.

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH

Sunday, April 6, 2014

\$ 836.17	General Collection
\$ 56.00	7 Day Lights
\$ 7.00	Eternal Light
\$ 171.00	1 st Sunday
\$ 180.00	Holy Days
\$ 180.00	Church Dues
\$ 20.00	Vigil Light
\$ 19.00	Tapers
\$ 326.00	Easter Flowers
\$ 50.00	Easter
\$ 25.00	Palm Sunday
\$ 20.00	Patriarchal Pence
\$ 1890.17	Total Collection

FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

St. Michael's 4th Annual International Children's Classic Golf Tournament. On Saturday, May 10th, St. Michael's is pleased to host the Fourth Annual International Children's Classic at Endwell Greens Golf Club. The captain and crew golf tournament is scheduled for a shotgun start at Noon. The cost is \$100 per participant or \$400 per foursome. The registration fee includes 18 holes of golf and two carts per team. Beverages will be provided for participants on the course. A dinner is to immediately follow the tournament at the golf course.

All net proceeds from this event will again be divided between the St. Nicholas Children's Home in Medzilaborce, Slovakia, Holy Cross Orphanage and the Regional Medical Center's Children's Wing both located in Uzhgorod, Ukraine. As in the past, this

outreach will impact the lives of many needy children and be the source of many blessings.

Men and women golfers are encouraged to enter the competition and mixed teams are also encouraged to participate. Prizes will be awarded to the tournaments 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams. Men's and ladies' longest drive, and both men's and women's closest to the pin contests will receive awards. Once again, we will be offering Hole-in-one prizes. All golfers will receive a commemorative gift and team photo.

We are also proud to announce that once again, George Skomsky PGA, of the International Golf School will be hosting a putting contest open to all participants at 11 AM.

Individuals who don't play golf but wish to support the tournament may purchase a \$25 dinner ticket. The price includes dinner with the players following the competition and entry into the door prize contest.

We look forward to your participation and support.

Sincerely in Christ, Fr. James S. Dutko

[Information and forms for this event are in the hall]

CAMP NAZARETH ANNUAL FAMILY DAY SUNDAY,

JUNE 1, 2014 (see flyer in hall). Fellowship & fun all day! Music entertainment, swimming, craft activities, games and the Raffle Drawing. 10am -- DIVINE LITURGY. Lunch/Picnic following Liturgy. MENU: Holupki, Roast Chicken, Roast Potatoes, String Bean Casserole, Tossed Salad, Roll, Homemade Desserts, Drinks. Vegetarian Option: Vegetable Primavera. ADULTS: \$10.00. Children under 13 : \$6.00. Children under 5: free. FAMILY PRICE: \$30.00 (includes 2 parents & all children under age 13)

CAMP NAZARETH FAMILY CAMP MAY 30 – JUNE 1, 2014. *Packets with information and registration forms are available in the hall by the door.:* Visit campnazareth.org, email campnazareth@acrod.org or call the Camp at 724-662-4840 for registration information.

St. John's Auxiliary, 310 Broadway, Scranton, Pa. will have a **Potato Pancake and Sausage/Pepper Sandwich Sale** on Friday, April 25, 2014. Pancakes - \$1.00 each and Sandwiches - \$5.00 each. Deadline for pre-orders is Wednesday, April 16, 2014. Pick up time is 12:30pm on the 25th while supply lasts. Phone 570-343-8820 to order.

THE ORIGINS OF PASCHA AND GREAT WEEK – PART I

By Alkiviadis C. Calivas, from

Great Week and Pascha in the Greek Orthodox Church, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1992.

In worship we encounter the living God. Through Worship God makes Himself present and active in our time, drawing the particles and moments of our life into the realm of redemption. He bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, who makes real the promise of Jesus to be in the midst of those gathered in His name (Mt 18.20). In our ecclesial assemblies, therefore, we do more than remember past events and recall future promises. We experience the risen Christ, who is "clothed with his past and future acts," as someone has noted. Thus, all that is past and all that is future are made present in the course of our liturgical celebrations.

Pascha¹, which commemorates the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is the oldest, most venerable and pre-eminent feast of the Church. It is the great Christian festival, the very center and heart of the liturgical year.

Jesus' passion, death and resurrection constitute the essence of His redemptive work. The narrative of these salvific actions of the Incarnate Son of God formed the oldest part of the Gospel tradition.² The solemn celebrations of Great Week and Pascha are centered upon these events. The divine services of the Week, crafted long ago in continuity with the experience, tradition and faith of the first Christians, help us penetrate and celebrate the mystery of our salvation.

The prototype of Pascha is the Jewish Passover, the festival of Israel's deliverance from bondage. Like the Old Testament Passover, Pascha is a festival of deliverance. But its nature is wholly other and unique, of which the Passover is only a pre-figurement. Pascha involves the ultimate redemption, i.e., the deliverance and liberation of all humanity from the malignant power of Satan and death, through the death and resurrection of Christ. Pascha is the feast of universal redemption. Our earliest sources for the annual celebration of the Christian Pascha come to us from the second century.³ The feast, however, must have originated in the apostolic period. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to imagine otherwise. The first Christians were Jews and obviously conscious of the Jewish festal calendar. They scarcely could have forgotten that the remarkable and compelling events of Christ's death, burial and resurrection had occurred at a time in

which the annual Passover was being observed. These Christians could not have failed to project the events of the passion and the resurrection of Christ on the Jewish festal calendar, nor would they have failed to connect and impose their faith on the annual observance of the Jewish Passover.⁴ St. Paul seems to indicate as much when writing to the Corinthians, "purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor 5.7-8).⁵

The early Church rejoiced in the event of the Resurrection. The new and principal day of worship of the Christians was the first day of the Jewish week, i.e., the day in which the Lord was raised from the dead. They assembled on that day⁶ to celebrate the Eucharist, through which they proclaimed the Lord's death and confessed his resurrection.⁷ Eventually they gave this day a Christian name, the Day of the Lord (Rev 1.10). It would be hard to imagine that the Christians of the first century would not have projected and connected in some new and significant way their weekly celebration of the sacred events of Christ's death and resurrection on the annual observance of the Passover.

Another point of interest in this connection is the emergence of the paschal fast and vigil. According to the earliest documents, Pascha is described as a nocturnal celebration with a long vigil, that was preceded by a fast.⁸ This suggests a connection with the Jewish rites of the Passover, even though there is a distinct difference of faith and rite between the Jewish and Christian observance. One such difference centers on the time of the celebration. The Jewish rite was an evening meal that ended at midnight while the Christian festival consisted of a long vigil that ended in the early dawn. It may well be that this delay was intentional, in order to distinguish the Christian night from the Jewish. Furthermore, the delay symbolized the fulfillment of the Passover by Christ, and thus signaled the transition from the old to the new Pascha. It has been suggested that this particular feature of the Paschal night prompted the persistent demand, which we encounter early on, that the Christian Pascha must come after the Jewish Passover.⁹

According to the chronology of the Gospel of John, the Lord was crucified and buried on the day before the Passover and rose the day after.¹⁰ In the year we have come to number 33 A.D., the Passover fell on a Saturday. The crucifixion, therefore, occurred on Friday, while the resurrection happened early Sunday morning.¹¹ Eventually, the celebration of Pascha in the early Church would be predicated upon this chronology.

In the beginning, the Christian Pascha was the occasion for the remembrance of the entire work of redemption, with a special reference to the Cross and the Resurrection. By the second century the churches of Asia Minor had come to observe Pascha on the 14 of Nisan, the day on which the Lord was crucified, while all the other churches observed Pascha on the Sunday after the 14 of Nisan, emphasizing the resurrection.¹² These two ways of computing the date of Pascha gave rise to the Paschal controversies of the second century. At the beginning of the third century, these disputes were settled in favor of the Sunday observance of Pascha. However, difficulties with inadequate calendars continued to plague the local churches, until the issue was finally resolved by the First Ecumenical Synod of Nicea in 325 A.D. The Fathers of the Synod decreed that henceforth Pascha was to be celebrated on the first Sunday, after the first full moon of the spring equinox. The Synod, also, determined that the date would be calculated in accordance with the Alexandrian calendar. The Orthodox Church continues to maintain this order.¹³

In the early Church, according to local custom, the celebration of Pascha was preceded by a one or two day fast. In a letter written to Pope Victor regarding the Paschal disputes, St. Irenaios (+ ca. 200) makes mention of the fasting practices that were being observed in his time by various local churches. He wrote, "for the controversy is not only concerning the day, but also concerning the very manner of the fast. For some think that they should fast one day, others two, yet others more; some moreover, count their day as consisting of forty hours day and night. And this variety in its observance has not originated in our time; but long before in that of our ancestors."¹⁴

It is clear from this testimony that fasting had become an integral element of the Paschal observance from the apostolic period. It probably came about as a result of the words of the Lord, "can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast" (Mt 9.15). The Paschal fast, mournful in nature, came to honor the Bridegroom of the Church, who was taken away, crucified, and buried.

The original one or two day fast was expanded by many local churches to include the whole week before Pascha.¹⁵ This process began in the third century. During the course of the fourth century the week long fast had become a universal practice, and the week itself came to be known as "Holy and Great."

The one week fast was increased still further by another development: the formation of the forty day period of the Great Fast or Lent.¹⁶ Lent represents the maximum expansion of the paschal fast. Though linked to the six day fast of the Great Week, the Lenten fast is separate and distinct from it.¹⁷

The celebrations of the Great Week developed gradually and in stages. The chronology of the sacred events of the serial aspects of the passion and the resurrection, as recorded in the Gospel of John, would effect the development of the last three days of the Week (Thursday, Friday and Saturday); while the sayings of the Lord and the events in His life immediately preceding the passion, as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, would effect the development of the first three days of the Week (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). In a subsequent development, the chronology of events pertaining to the raising of Lazarus and the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, according to the Gospel of John, would bring about the configuration of a two day festival (the Saturday of Lazarus and the Sunday of Palms) immediately preceding the Great Week. These two festal days anticipate the joy and the victory of the resurrection, and bridge the Great Fast with the Great Week.

The single liturgical event commemorating Christ's death and resurrection expanded very early "as a result of a more historically oriented approach and a more representational type of presentation" of the Paschal mystery.¹⁸ Each aspect of the mystery was broken down, emphasized ritually, and assigned to the day of the week in which it had occurred.

Thus Great Week was born. The crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Christ, together with the event of the Mystical Supper, constituted the very heart and center of the Great Week. The solemn celebration of these events began on Thursday evening and ended on the early dawn of Sunday. During the course of the fourth century a process was set in motion by which the solemnities of the Week would be further enhanced and elaborated.

NOTES

1. The term Pascha is the Hellenized form of the Jewish word *Pesach*, (or Phaska), which means passage or Passover. It does not derive from the Greek verb *passio*, to suffer, as some, like the ancient writer Meliton of Sardis, have thought. Meliton was inclined to associate the word Pascha with the verb *passio*, because, like his fellow Christians of Asia Minor, he was a Quartodeciman (literally a Fourteenth-ist). In the second century the churches of Asia Minor had come to relate the celebration of Pascha above all to the passion and death of Christ rather than to his resurrection. That is why they observed Pascha on the 14 day of Nisan, i.e., the day on which Christ was crucified (see below).

2. See Bishop Demetrios Trakatellis, *Authority and Passion* (Brookline, 1987); and Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (New York, 1977). Note, e.g., the Apostle Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2.22-28) and his defense before the Council (Acts 5.29-32). Note also the commemoration in the Anaphora of the Divine Liturgies of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom.

3. The earliest evidence is found in *The Letter of the Apostles* (ca. 150 A.D.). Written originally in Greek, it survives only in Coptic and Ethiopian translations. See Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha* (London, 1963), pp. 190-91.

4. See Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (New York, 1986), p. 2. See also J. G. Davies, *Holy Week: A Short History* (Richmond, 1974). A. A. McArthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year* (London, 1953). A. G. Mortimort, ed., *The Church at Prayer 4* (Collegeville, 1986).

5. The Jews used unleavened bread at the Passover. It was their custom to remove all yeast from their homes on the day before the Passover (the 14th day of Nisan). They ate unleavened bread (azymes) during the Passover festival (Exodus 12.1-20, and 13.3-10). See Anthony J. Saldarini, *Jesus and Passover* (New York, 1984), pp. 10, 34-36.

6. According to Jewish reckoning, each new day begins at sundown. It can be established that the primitive Church assembled on Saturday night for the celebration of the eucharist, following closely the Jewish pattern. Sacred meals were essentially supper meals related to the beginning of the day at evening. The eucharistic synaxis, like the Mystical (Last) Supper, was originally connected to a supper meal. This arrangement lasted at least until the end of the first or the early part of the second century, when for various reasons the original evening eucharistic synaxis was transferred first to the pre-dawn hours and later to the "third" hour of the day.

7.1 Cor 11.23-26. See also the Anaphora of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil.

8. See, e.g., *The Letter of the Apostles*, 15: "After my return to the Father you will celebrate the memory of my death ... and (I) will come to you and join in the night vigil with you, and stay near you until cockcrow. When you then have ended your agape, the memorial of me which you make . . ." See *New Testament Apocrypha*, p. 199.

9. See T. J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, p. 6.

10. See L. Sabourin, "Easter in the Early Church," *Religious Studies Bulletin* 2/1 (1982)23-25. Veselin Kesich, *The Gospel Image of Christ* (Crestwood, 1972), pp. 56-60.

11. We do not know the exact time of the resurrection. It happened at some point in the early morning hours of Sunday, the first day of the week. The Gospels only make reference to the time the first witnesses to the resurrection arrived at the empty tomb. Matthew tells us it was "toward the dawn" (28.1); Mark says it was "very early" (16.2); Luke says it was "early dawn" (24.1); John tells us it was "early, while it was still dark" (20.1).

12. According to Jewish custom, the Passover began on the evening of the 14th day of the first month, i.e., Nisan. The 14th of Nisan was the day of preparation for the Passover. The paschal lambs were slaughtered in the afternoon of that day in anticipation of the festival, which began at sundown. Since, in accordance to Jewish practice, each new day begins at sunset, the 15 of Nisan was the first day of the Passover. Jesus was resurrected after the first day of the Passover.

13. For a fuller discussion on the date of Pascha see A. Calivas, "The Date of Pascha: The Need to Continue the Debate," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 3514 (1990) 333-43. According to the decree of the First Ecumenical Synod, the date of Pascha can only occur on a Sunday between March 22 and April 25. However, due to the discrepancy that exists in the Orthodox Church today because of the use of two calendars, the Julian (Old) and the Gregorian (New), the dates of March 22 and April 25 are superimposed on the new calendar. (March 22 in the New calendar reads April 3, while April 25 reads May 8. This reflects the 13 day difference between the two calendars.) In this way all Orthodox Christians celebrate Pascha on the same day, but not on the same date.

14. Quoted by Eusebios, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, 5, 24, 12-17. According to ancient custom and practice, the faithful consumed only one frugal meal in the afternoon during fast days. The Great Week fast was observed by all with great solemnity. The length and the severity of the fast depended on local usage. In time, fasting practices would be influenced greatly by the monastic experience. For a discussion on the practice of fasting, see *The Lenten Triodion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (London, 1978), pp. 28-37.

15. See Dionysios of Alexandria, *Letter to Basileiades*, PG 10.1273-76.

16. The Great Fast with its rich liturgical material developed over a long period of time. Two practices in the early Church were especially significant in its development. The one pertained to the preparation of catechumens for baptism and the other to the reconciliation of lapsed Christians to the Church. Both practices were related to the Paschal feast.

17. The forty day fast developed along different lines in the East and the West. For most of the East the two fast periods, though related, were separate and distinct. In the Western tradition, however, the forty days include the six day fast of Holy Week. The Great Fast seeks to make the Christian mindful of his/her dependence on God. It prepares each person for the worthy celebration of Pascha by calling all to repentance and to a deeper conversion of the heart. The Great Fast finds its completion in the solemn celebrations of the Great Week.

18. Adolf Adam, *The Liturgical Year* (New York, 1981), English translation by M. J. O'Connell, p. 63.