

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

Vol. 4 No. 4.2

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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PASCHA

April 12, 2015

Christ Is Risen! Christos Voskrese! Christos Anesti! Feltamadt Krisztus Al Massih Kam!

Indeed He Is Risen! Vo Istinu Voskrese! Alithos Anesti! Valoban Felta-madott! Hakkan Kam!

PARISH CALENDAR

PEOPLE STUFF

Sun., Apr. 12 **PASCHA: THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Baskets
Easter Egg Hunt for the kiddies.

Mon., Apr. 13 **BRIGHT MONDAY**

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy & Paschal Procession—
Special Sheets

Sun., Apr. 19 **THOMAS SUNDAY**

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – special sheets
Church School Meets
Men's Club regular monthly meeting
(schedule change)

Confessions: Before Divine Liturgy

FASTING AND FEASTING

BRIGHT WEEK:

From Pascha through Thomas Sunday, there is *no fast* permitted, even on Wednesday or Friday, as we celebrate the great joy of our salvation in the Resurrection.

Please remember in your prayers:

Deceased: Fr. Matthew Baker. Fr. Thomas Hopko.

Living: Fr. George Dursa. Fr. Donald Valasek. Matt & Lori Algar. Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Tim & Christina Bracey. Bob Chalk. Susan Danchak. Ricky, Rick & Sarah. Michael Danchak. Jada Eiden. Ted Goosley. Tammy Hall. Heather Harris. Robert & Eddie Hawley. Lorraine Kacaba. Dawn & Warren Kieffer. Anna Mae Kuklis. John Lange. Dee Lositski. Peggy Majcher. Theresa Niester. Margie Pecuch. Mary Phillips. John Polanichka. Karen Rolka. Emma Sacco. JoyAnn Scarnato. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell. Marion Sosnowski. Russell Spilka. Jeff Thomas. Ann Marie Tigue. Gary Wassel. Julia Worobey.

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

Assisted Living Homes: Julie Kovacs. Julie Roberts.

Altar Vigil Lights: Memory of Nick & Agnes Towarnick by Shimo Family.

Eternal Light: Memory of Nick & Agnes Towarnick by Shimo Family.

No Panachidas & Memorials for the deceased: As noted in last week's bulletin, no memorial services for the deceased are celebrated from Palm (Flowery

Sunday) until Thomas Sunday (Sunday after Easter), as we are called to focus on the great Salvific Event of Our Lord's Death and Resurrection. Panachidas & other memorials may be celebrated again beginning on Thomas Sunday after Divine Liturgy.

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Ongoing Food Collection Project: The food donation container continues to be available in the Church Hall. Please help fill this container with non-perishable food items: cans, dry goods, etc. This is an ongoing good thing.

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH	
ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH	
APRIL 5, 2015	
\$1008.00	General Collection
\$ 194.00	1st Sunday
\$ 113.00	7 Day Light
\$2164.00	Pirohi
\$ 137.00	Holy Days
\$ 184.00	Church Dues
\$ 50.00	Easter
\$ 20.00	Taper Candles
\$ 276.00	Flowers
\$ 60.00	Decorated Candle
\$4206.00	Total Collection

PARISH STUFF

Easter Egg Hunt! For the children of the parish, after Divine Liturgy today.

Blessed, decorated candles are available. \$10 donation. Please see Frank Pucher or John Brizinski.

Easter Basket Blessing: Easter Baskets will be blessed on Saturday evening after Resurrection Matins, and on Sunday morning after the Divine Liturgy.

Men's Club: The regular monthly meeting has been moved to next Sunday, April 19.

Parish Board: The regular monthly meeting has been moved to Sunday, April 26.

Thanks and God bless! To all who remembered me with prayers, cards and gifts for this celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord.

Receiving the Holy Eucharist reminder: In order to help with making sure that the Eucharist is received properly and does not drop or spill, I remind you all of

the following:

1. Stand as close to the step as you can so that I do not have to reach.
2. Let the servers hold the communion cloth under your chin. Do not pull it down or away from you.
3. Bless yourself *after* you have stepped away from the chalice.
4. Remove lipstick, etc., before approaching the chalice.

Priests' Retreat: I will be gone most of this week at a mandatory retreat at Camp Nazareth. As far as I know, so will all of the local clergy of our diocese. If there is an emergency, please call my cell phone and I will do what I can.

From the Diocese & Other Stuff

Breast Cancer Benefit for Jean Marie Jones: this Benefit Dinner and Basket Raffle will be held Sunday, April 19, 2015, at Keyser Valley Community Center, 103 N Keyser Ave, Scranton. The Dinner menu:

Pasta, meatballs, salad, roll, dessert, & coffee or tea

Dinner served from 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM, Dine-In or Take-Out. Raffle to start @ 5:30 PM~ you do not have to be present to claim prize. Tickets \$10 per dinner. For more info, call 570-344-3202 or go to <http://www.wherevent.com/detail/Mary-Graff-Conrad-Jean-Marie-Jones-Pasta-Dinner-Basket-Raffle-Benefit>.

Camp Nazareth Family Day Raffle Tickets! We now have the raffle tickets for the annual Camp Family Day. \$20 each. Please see Nick Polanichka for yours before they run out!

Family Camp at Camp Nazareth June 5 – June 6. The Registration Form, Flyer and Schedule are all available on the Camp website: campnazareth.org. Planned are a variety of activities and events that will allow your family the opportunity to learn together, have fun together, pray together and simply be together in the peaceful environment of the Camp. Families will be staying together, and have to themselves a Camp cabin; plenty of space to rest and relax and simply be together during and after the weekend's festivities. Don't miss out on this opportunity for you and your family. Come and help us to make this an ongoing and rewarding event for our Diocesan families. Space is limited to the first 10

families, so please send in your registration forms soon. They are due by Friday, May 22, 2015.

Young Women's Encounter: From His Grace, Bishop Gregory:

Protocol N. 10/2015
Glory to Jesus Christ!
Dear Diocesan Parents and Children,
During the 1st ever Young Women's Encounter last summer 26 young women from across our Diocese had the opportunity to hear from Orthodox women who are following God's calling. They enjoyed fellowship and learned to use their individual gifts and find their role in the Church.
This summer, our Diocese is happy to host the 2nd Annual Young Women's Encounter! The YWE is designed specifically for our Diocesan young women. The Young Women's Encounter will provide an opportunity for the young women of our Diocese to spend time in each others' company, have fun, pray together, and learn about how God calls each woman to serve His church with her unique talents and abilities.
The Young Women's Encounter will take place from Sunday, June 28th to Wednesday, July 1st, 2015.
The YWE will be held at the Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Christian Church in Windber, Pennsylvania. Young women in our Diocese ages 12-18 are encouraged to attend. Please do not miss this opportunity for the girls of our Church and Diocese to gather with one another and grow in their faith. We ask for your prayers and support as we plan for this event. With God's help and your participation, we hope this event will continue for many years to come.
Space is limited, so please register as soon as possible. Registration forms will be made available in the coming weeks & space is again limited to the first 30 young women.
Looking forward to seeing you this summer at our youth events! Working in His vineyard with much love,
+ Bishop Gregory of Nyssa

The YWE event runs concurrently with our Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat.

If there are any women in the parish who would desire

to serve as volunteer chaperones during the event, you are encouraged to contact Pani Eleni Stagon as soon as possible at Eleniee@yahoo.com or 304-296-4319.

GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY

from www.oca.org

Great and Holy Saturday is the day on which Christ reposed in the tomb. The Church calls this day the Blessed Sabbath.

“The great Moses mystically foreshadowed this day when he said:

God blessed the seventh day.

This is the blessed Sabbath.

This is the day of rest,

on which the only-begotten Son of God rested from all His works....”

(Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Saturday)

By using this title the Church links Holy Saturday with the creative act of God. In the initial account of creation as found in the Book of Genesis, God made man in His own image and likeness. To be truly himself, man was to live in constant communion with the source and dynamic power of that image: God. Man fell from God. Now Christ, the Son of God through whom all things were created, has come to restore man to communion with God. He thereby completes creation. All things are again as they should be. His mission is consummated. On the Blessed Sabbath He rests from all His works.

The Transition

Holy Saturday is a neglected day in parish life. Few people attend the Services. Popular piety usually reduces Holy Week to one day—Holy Friday. This day is quickly replaced by another—Easter Sunday. Christ is dead and then suddenly alive. Great sorrow is suddenly replaced by great joy. In such a scheme Holy Saturday is lost.

In the understanding of the Church, sorrow is not replaced by joy; it is transformed into joy. This distinction indicates that it is precisely within death that Christ continues to effect triumph.

Trampling down Death by Death

We sing that Christ is “...trampling down death by death” in the troparion of Easter. This phrase gives great meaning to Holy Saturday. Christ’s repose in the tomb is an “active” repose. He comes in search of His fallen friend, Adam, who represents all men. Not finding him on earth, he descends to the realm of death, known as Hades in the Old Testament. There He finds him and brings him life once again. This is the victory: the dead are given life. The tomb is no longer a forsaken, lifeless place. By His death Christ tramples down death by death.

The Icon of the Descent into Hades

The traditional icon used by the Church on the feast of Easter is an icon of Holy Saturday: the descent of Christ into Hades. It is a painting of theology, for no one has ever seen this event. It depicts Christ, radiant in hues of white and blue, standing on the shattered gates of Hades. With arms outstretched He is joining hands with Adam and all the other Old Testament righteous whom He has found there. He leads them from the kingdom of death. By His death He tramples death.

“Today Hades cries out groaning:

I should not have accepted the Man born of Mary.

He came and destroyed my power.

He shattered the gates of brass.

As God, He raised the souls I had held captive.

Glory to Thy cross and resurrection, O Lord!”

(Vespers Liturgy of Holy Saturday)

The Vespers Liturgy

The Vespers of Holy Saturday inaugurates the Paschal celebration, for the liturgical cycle of the day always begins in the evening. In the past, this service constituted the first part of the great Paschal vigil during which the catechumens were baptized in the “baptisterion” and led in procession back into the church for participation in their first Divine Liturgy, the Paschal Eucharist. Later, with the number of catechumens increasing, the first baptismal part of the Paschal celebration was disconnected from the liturgy of the Paschal night and formed our pre-paschal

service: Vespers and the Liturgy of St Basil the Great which follows it. It still keeps the marks of the early celebration of Pascha as baptismal feast and that of Baptism as Paschal sacrament (death and resurrection with Jesus Christ—Romans 6).

On “Lord I Call” the Saturday Resurrectional stichiras of Tone 1 are sung, followed by the special stichiras of Holy Saturday, which stress the death of Christ as descent into Hades, the region of death, for its destruction. But the pivotal point of the service occurs after the Entrance, when fifteen lessons from the Old Testament are read, all centered on the promise of the Resurrection, all glorifying the ultimate Victory of God, prophesied in the victorious Song of Moses after the crossing of the Red Sea (“Let us sing to the Lord, for gloriously has He been glorified”), the salvation of Jonah, and that of the three youths in the furnace.

Then the epistle is read, the same epistle that is still read at Baptism (Romans 6:3-11), in which Christ’s death and resurrection become the source of the death in us of the “old man,” the resurrection of the new, whose life is in the Risen Lord. During the special verses sung after the epistle, “Arise, O God, and judge the earth,” the dark lenten vestments are put aside and the clergy vest in the bright white ones, so that when the celebrant appears with the Gospel the light of Resurrection is truly made visible in us, the “Rejoice” with which the Risen Christ greeted the women at the grave is experienced as being directed at us.

The Liturgy of St Basil continues in this white and joyful light, revealing the Tomb of Christ as the Life-giving Tomb, introducing us into the ultimate reality of Christ’s Resurrection, communicating His life to us, the children of fallen Adam.

One can and must say that of all services of the Church that are inspiring, meaningful, revealing, this one: the Vespers and Liturgy of St Basil the Great and Holy Saturday is truly the liturgical climax of the Church. If one opens one’s heart and mind to it and accepts its meaning and its light, the very truth of Orthodoxy is given by it, the taste and the joy of that new life which shines forth from the grave.

– Rev. Alexander Schmemmann