



# The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



## APRIL BULLETIN SPONSOR

*In memory of my mother Dorothy– Given By V.R. Andrew Bartek*

### **Liturgical & Events Schedule**

#### **Sunday, April 28**

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Procession outside with Palms following 3rd Antiphon / Social (B-day & Ann. commemorations )

6:00 PM: Matins for Holy & Great Monday

#### **Monday, April 29**

9:00 AM: Presanctified Liturgy

6:00 PM: Matins for Holy and Great Tuesday

#### **Tuesday, April 30**

9:00 AM: Presanctified Liturgy

6:00 PM: Matins for Holy an Great Wednesday

#### **Wednesday, May 1**

9:00 AM: Presanctified Liturgy

6:00 PM: Sacrament of Holy Unction (You must have received Holy Confession prior and please fast from noon)

#### **Thursday, May 2**

9:00 AM: Vesperal Divine Liturgy

6:00 PM: Matins for Holy & Great Friday (Reading of the 12 Passion Gospels) / Set up Tomb & Flowers

#### **Friday, May 3**

9:00 AM: Royal Hours for Holy and Great Friday

3:00 PM: Burial Vespers of our Lord and God / Lite Lenten meal in basement

6:15 PM: Lamentations on the Tomb of Christ followed by Procession

#### **Saturday, May 4**

9:00 AM: Vesperal Divine Liturgy

11:25 PM: Nocturns

#### **Sunday, May 5**

Midnight: Paschal Matins

9:55 AM: Paschal Hours sung by choir

10:00 AM: Pascal Divine Liturgy / followed by the blessing of baskets

#### **Monday, May 6**

9:00 AM: Resurrection Matins

10:00 AM: am Paschal Divine Liturgy (remembrance of Fr. Andrews 19th anniversary to the Holy Priesthood moved from May 2nd) / followed by meal at local restaurant

#### **Tuesday, May 7**

6:00 PM: Agape Vespers followed by Procession outside w/ the Reading of the Paschal Gospels) / Please bring your Paschal foods to eat after service (Agape Meal with our spiritual

### **2024 - COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Nancy Tusinac (President)

Phone- 724-456-7366

Melenie Rusnak (Vice-President)

Phone– 330-398-3700

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Sub-deacon Dr. Donald Tamulouis (Council)

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Linda Livosky (Council) (Kitchen issues)

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#### **Maintenance Issues:**

Michael Simko - 330-565-0084

Michael Centofanti - 330-544-3518

### **APRIL Monthly Charity**

St. Tikhon's Seminary

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

[padrebartek@gmail.com](mailto:padrebartek@gmail.com)

## PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS– UPDATED 1-18-24

Send a “Thinking of You” card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

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### Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) / Commemorated on April 28

Palm Sunday is the celebration of the triumphant entrance of Christ into the royal city of Jerusalem. He rode on a colt for which He Himself had sent, and He permitted the people to hail Him publicly as a king. A large crowd met Him in a manner befitting royalty, waving palm branches and placing their garments in His path. They greeted Him with these words: “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel! (John 12:13).

This day together with the raising of Lazarus are signs pointing beyond themselves to the mighty deeds and events which consummate Christ’s earthly ministry. The time of fulfillment was at hand. Christ’s raising of Lazarus points to the destruction of death and the joy of resurrection which will be accessible to all through His own death and resurrection. His entrance into Jerusalem is a fulfillment of the messianic prophecies about the king who will enter his holy city to establish a final kingdom. “Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass” (Zech 9:9).

Finally, the events of these triumphant two days are but the passage to Holy Week: the “hour” of suffering and death for which Christ came. Thus the triumph in an earthly sense is extremely short-lived. Jesus enters openly into the midst of His enemies, publicly saying and doing those things which mostly enrage them. The people themselves will soon reject Him. They misread His brief earthly triumph as a sign of something else: His emergence as a political messiah who will lead them to the glories of an earthly kingdom.

#### Our Pledge

The liturgy of the Church is more than meditation or praise concerning past events. It communicates to us the eternal presence and power of the events being celebrated and makes us participants in those events. Thus the services of Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday bring us to our own moment of life and death and entrance into the Kingdom of God: a Kingdom not of this world, a Kingdom accessible in the Church through repentance and baptism.

On Palm Sunday palm and willow branches are blessed in the Church. We take them in order to raise them up and greet the King and Ruler of our life: Jesus Christ. We take them in order to reaffirm our baptismal pledges. As the One who raised Lazarus and entered Jerusalem to go to His voluntary Passion stands in our midst, we are faced with the same question addressed to us at baptism: “Do you accept Christ?” We give our answer **Con’t Pg 4**

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## PRAYER LIST– Updated 4-21-24

**PARISHIONERS:** Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Donna Chiarelli / Helen Colaluca / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Anthony Jesko, Jr. / Paula Kennedy / Sue Kennedy / George Kolesar / Barbara Kolesar / Ronald (Thomas) Moore / Matushka Helen Psinka / Mary Jane Puskas / Carol Ruff / Kenny Ruff / Joanna Shepelevich / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Emilia Yannitto / Andy Zenko / Marion Zwinski

**HIERARCHS & CLERGY:** Archbishop Benjamin / Archbishop Alexander / Archbishop Melchizedek / Archbishop Nathaniel / Bishop Matthias / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Emil / AP Vladimir / Fr. Matthew Nyumu & his family & parish

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Chrissy (Fr.) / David (Willison) / Frank Batura (Fr.) / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Genna & her un-born baby (Koval) / Paul Demkosky (Fr.) / John Galpin (Fr.) / Bruce Harris (Sabo) / Katie (Garrity) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Paul (Kolesar) / Karen (Vansuch) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Jonathan Leso (Fr.) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Eugene (Pallai) / Teri Petroff (Fr.) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / William Romanchak (Fr.) / Roxanne Yannitto) / Julia Shirilla / Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Brian (Shirilla) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Drew (Willison) / Ron Zenko / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Zoland Zile (Fr.) / Brenna & her unborn baby (Fr.)

**MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

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### RECEIVED THIS EMAIL FROM ARCHDEACON JOSEPH MATUSIAK CONCERNING THE UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING IN CHICAGO IN JUNE

Greetings from Poland. I pray you are all well.

I am writing again with reference to Chicago 2024.

At present we have around 40 students from the US and 15 from abroad who have signed up for the event. Of the 40 from the US roughly 15 are from the Diocese of the Midwest.

As you know this is a unique project for the diocese, and I'd even say for the OCA. It certainly isn't unprecedented, as both entities have hosted international youth in the past, but it hasn't happened for quite a long time. To my mind this event is important in the life of our youth for the following reasons:

It will help them to broaden their horizons through meeting youth from other countries and backgrounds which will allow for the appreciation of different perspectives, an essential part of the formation of young people.

It will be a venue where students from different local Orthodox churches and backgrounds can develop bonds of fellowship to carry and sustain them throughout their lives.

The urban pilgrimage with the Tikhvin icon that has been conceived through this project is a singular event like no other. To give our youth the opportunity to witness their faith in Jesus Christ and to share their Orthodox culture in this way is certainly something they have never experienced before.

It will give them a sense of belonging to the larger family that is the Diocese of the Midwest, and the Orthodox Church worldwide. I hope that you will share this opportunity not only with the youth in your parish, but also with those of other jurisdictions in your area.

I have attached the event flyer. You can find more information at [www.suprasl.org/chicago2024](http://www.suprasl.org/chicago2024)

Should you have any questions or need more information please do not hesitate to contact me. Yours in Christ,  
Archdeacon Joseph

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## MAY Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

**NOTE: If anything is missing from the Sponsorships please contact Fr. Andrew ASAP**

**Bulletin:** In honor of V. R. Andrew Bartek on the occasion of his anniversary to the Holy Priesthood

**Wine:** AVAILABLE

**Incense:** In memory of Nadine Pallai- given by Marion Zwinski & Karen Phillips.

**Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light:** In honor of my granddaughter Katharyn James on occasion of her birthday- given by Nancy Tusinac / In memory of my wife Irene Horodnic- Given by George Horodnic / In honor of Patty Thompson's birthday- Given by the Thompson Family

**Altar Candles:** Robert Paul & Cynthia on the occasion of their Wedding anniversary / In honor of Matthew & Deena Vansuch & Josh & Sarah Wilson on the occasion of their Wedding Anniversary

**Tetrapod Candles:** In honor of Nancy Tusinac on the occasion of her birthday

**St. Herman Candles:** Commemorating all who participate in maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers & those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.

**St. Panteleimon Icon Candles**– In memory of my family & friends– Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

**Protection Icon Candles:** AVAILABLE

**St. John the Baptist Candles:** AVAILABLE

**Flowers:** AVAILABLE

<u>\$50 per month</u>	<u>\$30 per month</u>	<u>\$25 per month</u>
*Wine	*St. Herman candles	Incense
*Bulletin	*St. Panteleimon Icon candles	
*Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	*Protection Icon candles	<b>Flowers - \$50 for 2 weeks at a time– Updated</b>
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

### *Palm Sunday con't from Pg 2*

by daring to take the branch and raise it up: "I accept Him as King and God!"

Thus, on the eve of Christ's Passion, in the celebration of the joyful cycle of the triumphant days of Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday, we reunite ourselves to Christ, affirm His Lordship over the totality of our life, and express our readiness to follow Him to His Kingdom:

... that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:10-11).

Very Rev. Paul Lazor



ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - APRIL	2023	2024
<b>1st week</b>		
Saturday Vespers	12	19
Sunday	65/ 14	70 / 55 Communicants
<b>2nd Week</b>		
Saturday Vespers	No Vespers- weather	10
Sunday	53 /40 Weather	70 / 55 Communicants
<b>3rd Week</b>		
Saturday Vespers	No Vespers (weather)	30 (AB Visit)
Sunday (Pascha)	56 / 38 (weather)	80 / 67 (AB visit)
<b>4th Week</b>		
Lazarus Sat. Saturday Vespers	35 / 23 Communicants 18	
Palm Sunday	98 / 63 Communicants	
<b>5th Week</b>		
Nocturns / Matins	50	
Pascha Liturgy	164 / 95	

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## REPOSED LIST FOR APRIL

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1- Andy Basala (1982)                  | 14- Luba Despotovich (1936) ©           |
| 1- Andreas Basala (1923)               | 14- Peter Magriplis (1937) ©            |
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| 13- Michael Pikos (1960) ©             | 30- Sevasti Tsaknis (1930) ©            |
|  | 30- George Libertin (1939) ©            |

### Great and Holy Tuesday / Commemorated April 30

At Matins: Matthew 22: 15-23, 39. Condemnation of Pharisees, i.e. of the blind and hypocritical religion, of those who think they are the leaders of man and the light of the world, but who in fact “shut up the Kingdom of heaven to men.”

At the Presanctified Liturgy: Matthew 24: 36-26, 2. The End again and the parables of the End: the ten wise virgins who had enough oil in their lamps and the ten foolish ones who were not admitted to the bridal banquet; the parable of ten talents “. . . Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” And, finally the Last Judgment.

These Gospel lessons are explained and elaborated in the hymnology of these days: the stichiras and the triodia (short canons of three odes each sung at Matins). One warning, one exhortation runs through all of them: the end and the judgment are approaching, let us prepare for them:

“Behold, O my soul, the Master has conferred on thee a talent Receive the gift with fear; Lend to him who gave; distribute to the poor And acquire for thyself thy Lord as thy Friend; That when He shall come in glory, Thou mayest stand on His right hand And hear His blessed voice: Enter, my servant, into the joy of thy Lord.” (Tuesday Matins)

Throughout the whole Lent the two books of the Old Testament read at vespers were Genesis and **Con't Pg7**

## Great and Holy Thursday / Commemorated on May 2

THURSDAY: The Last Supper

Two events shape the liturgy of Great and Holy Thursday: the Last Supper of Christ with His disciples, and the betrayal of Judas. The meaning of both is in love. The Last Supper is the ultimate revelation of God's redeeming love for man, of love as the very essence of salvation. And the betrayal of Judas reveals that sin, death and self-destruction are also due to love, but to deviated and distorted love, love directed at that which does not deserve love. Here is the mystery of this unique day, and its liturgy, where light and darkness, joy and sorrow are so strangely mixed, challenges us with the choice on which depends the eternal destiny of each one of us. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come... having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end..." (John 13:1). To understand the meaning of the Last Supper we must see it as the very end of the great movement of Divine Love which began with the creation of the world and is now to be consummated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

God is Love (1 John 4:8). And the first gift of Love was life. The meaning, the content of life was communion. To be alive man was to eat and to drink, to partake of the world. The world was thus Divine love made food, made Body of man. And being alive, i.e. partaking of the world, man was to be in communion with God, to have God as the meaning, the content and the end of his life. Communion with the God-given world was indeed communion with God. Man received his food from God and making it his body and his life, he offered the whole world to God, transformed it into life in God and with God. The love of God gave life to man, the love of man for God transformed this life into communion with God. This was paradise. Life in it was, indeed, eucharistic. Through man and his love for God the whole creation was to be sanctified and transformed into one all-embracing sacrament of Divine Presence and man was the priest of this sacrament.

But in sin man lost this eucharistic life. He lost it because he ceased to see the world as a means of Communion with God and his life as eucharist, as adoration and thanksgiving. . . He loves himself and the world for their own sake; he made himself the content and the end of his life. He thought that his hunger and thirst, i.e. his dependence of his life on the world—can be satisfied by the world as such, by food as such. But world and food, once they are deprived of their initial sacramental meaning—as means of communion with God, once they are not received for God's sake and filled with hunger and thirst for God, once, in other words, God is no longer their real "content," can give no life, satisfy no hunger, for they have no life in themselves. And thus by putting his love in them, man deviated his love from the only object of all love, of all

hunger, of all desires. And he died. For death is the inescapable "decomposition" of life cut from its only source and content. Man thought to find life in the world and in food, but he found death. His life became communion with death, for instead of transforming the world by faith, love, and adoration into communion with God, he submitted himself entirely to the world, he ceased to be its priest and became its slave. And by his sin the whole world was made a cemetery, where people condemned to death partook of death and "sat in the region and shadow of death" (Matt. 4:16).

But if man betrayed, God remained faithful to man. He did not "turn Himself away forever from His creature whom He had made, neither did He forget the works of His hands, but He visited him in diverse manners, through the tender compassion of His mercy" (Liturgy of Saint Basil). A new Divine work began, that of redemption and salvation. And it was fulfilled in Christ, the Son of God Who in order to restore man to his pristine beauty and to restore life as communion with God, became Man, took upon Himself our nature, with its thirst and hunger, with its desire for and love of, life. And in Him life was revealed, given, accepted and fulfilled as total and perfect Eucharist, as total and perfect communion with God. He rejected the basic human temptation: to live "by bread alone"; He revealed that God and His kingdom are the real food, the real life of man. And this perfect eucharistic Life, filled with God, and, therefore Divine and immortal, He gave to all those who would believe in Him, i.e. find in Him the meaning and the content of their lives. Such is the wonderful meaning of the Last Supper. He offered Himself as the true food of man, because the Life revealed in Him is the true Life. And thus the movement of Divine Love which began in paradise with a Divine "take, eat. . ." (for eating is life for man) comes now "unto the end" with the Divine "take, eat, this is My Body..." (for God is life of man). The Last Supper is the restoration of the paradise of bliss, of life as Eucharist and Communion.

But this hour of ultimate love is also that of the ultimate betrayal. Judas leaves the light of the Upper Room and goes into darkness. "And it was night" (John 13:30). Why does he leave? Because he loves, answers the Gospel, and his fateful love is stressed again and again in the hymns of Holy Thursday. It does not matter indeed, that he loves the "silver." Money stands here for all the deviated and distorted love which leads man into betraying God. It is, indeed, love stolen from God and Judas, therefore, is the Thief. When he does not love God and in God, man still loves and desires, for he was created to love and love is his nature, but it is then a dark and self-destroying passion and death is at its end. And each year, as we immerse ourselves into the unfathomable light and depth of Holy Thursday, the same decisive question is addressed to each one of us: do I respond to Christ's love and accept it as my life, do I follow Judas into the darkness of his night? **Con't Pg 9**

## APRIL Celebrations

### BIRTHDAYS

- 2- Fr. Andrew Bartek
- 4- His Grace Bishop Matthias
- 8- Sherrie Fredericks
- 10- Mary Fredericks
- 11- Lynn Polewan, Christopher Mihaly
- 12- Michele Basile
- 13- Margarita Leso
- 18- Diane Tryon
- 20- Nectarios Mihaly
- 23- Paul Demkosky Jr., Andrew Zelinsky
- 24- Matt Lariccia III

### ANNIVERSARY

- 17- Matt & Brittany
- 30-2011- Retired Bishop Matthias of Chicago

### NAMES DAY

- 22- AB Nathaniel of Detroit
- 23- Fr. Andrew Bartek
- 25- AB Mark of Philadelphia



### Great Tuesday con't from Pg 5

Proverbs. With the beginning of Holy Week they are replaced by Exodus and Job. Exodus is the story of Israel's liberation from Egyptian slavery, of their Passover. It prepares us for the understanding of Christ's exodus to His Father, of His fulfillment of the whole history of salvation. Job, the Sufferer, is the Old Testament icon of Christ. This reading announces the great mystery of Christ's sufferings, obedience and sacrifice.

The liturgical structure of these three days is still of the Lenten type. It includes, therefore, the prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian with prostrations, the augmented reading of the Psalter, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and the Lenten liturgical chant. We are still in the time of repentance, for repentance alone makes us partakers of the Pascha of Our Lord, opens to us the doors of the Paschal banquet. And then, on Great and Holy Wednesday, as the last Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is about to be completed, after the Holy Gifts have been removed from the altar, the priest reads for the last time the Prayer of Saint Ephrem. At this moment, the preparation comes to an end. The Lord summons us now to His Last Supper.

by THE VERY REV. ALEXANDER SCHMANN

## Metropolitan Tikhon issues letter on recent updates to the Pension Plan

Today, April 12, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon sent the following letter to the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America. He also sent copies to the members of the Metropolitan Council, Diocesan Chancellors, and members of the Pension Board.

Your Eminences, Your Graces,

I greet you at the end of this fourth week of the Great Fast as we continue to journey toward the great feast of the resurrection of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Last Thursday, we concluded the Regular Spring 2024 Session of the Holy Synod, which was preceded by a special joint meeting with the Church Officers, the Diocesan Chancellors, the General Counsel, and representatives of the Pension Board. Replicating the pattern established last October with the Metropolitan Council, *Con't Pg 11*

## ST. VLADIMIR'S SUMMER CAMP

Due to increasing costs for the first time in over 5 years we have to increase the camp tuition. We have also changed the payment method as well, all fees are due upon registration. There are scholarships and some financial aid available if needed, please contact Matushka Catrina KOvalak if you need such assistance. Some parishes also have programs in place to help off set the tuition price so, please check with your priest.

The new tuition prices are as follows:

\$450 for first child / week

\$400 for second child / week

\$375 for each additional children / week

Session 1 is from June 30-July 6 (ages 8-12)

Session 2 is from July 7-July 13

Session 3 is from July 14-July 20 (ages 13-18)

Session 1 & 3: These sessions are more service based camping experiences. These weeks also include craft projects daily along with learning sessions with the resident clergy.

Session 2 (FOCA Junior Olympics): This week takes sports and Orthodoxy and combines them. The campers have a different sport everyday with both individual and team events. The campers also have learning sessions with the resident clergy.

Please visit the camp website to register and pay tuition. You may also make a donation to the camp there too.

[www.stvladimirscampohio.com](http://www.stvladimirscampohio.com) you may also visit our facebook and Instagram pages both are St. Vladimir's Summer Camp.

Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

<b>Attendance: Lenten Services</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>1st week</b>		
Forgiveness Vespers	30	34
Monday PM	30 Canon	17 Canon
Tuesday PM	20 Canon	25 Canon
Wednesday PM	26 Canon	18 Canon
Thursday PM	22 Canon	22 Canon
Friday PM	31 / 16 Communicants	29 / 18 Communicants
<b>2nd week</b>		
Wednesday PM	22 / 7 communicants	32 / 23 Communicants
Friday PM	16 Akathist	32 / 18 Communicants
<b>3rd week</b>		
Wednesday PM	33 / 16 Communicants	38 / 24 Communicants
Friday PM	21 Akathist	23 / 16 Communicants
<b>4th week</b>		
Wednesday PM	41 / 22 Communicants	37 / 25 Communicants
Friday PM	Was Annunciation vespers 22	25/ 15 Communicants
Soul Saturday		13
<b>5th week</b>		
Wednesday PM	36 / 22 Communicants	28 / 20 Communicants
Thursday PM	19 Full Canon	13 Full Canon
Friday PM	30 Akathist	30 Akathist
<b>6th Week</b>		
Wednesday PM	31 / 17	
Friday	35 Vespers	
<b>Holy Week</b>		
Sunday PM	0	
Monday AM	0	
Monday PM	35	
Tues AM	14	
Tuesday PM	25	
Wednesday AM	15	
Wednesday PM	56	
Thursday AM	15	
Thursday PM	48	
Friday AM	8	
Friday Afternoon	52	
Friday PM	74	
Saturday AM	40 / 37	

### **His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Visits New Skete and Holy Myrrhbearers Monasteries**

On Thursday, April 11, and Friday, April 12, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon traveled to upstate New York, where he made arch-pastoral visits to the Monasteries of New Skete in Cambridge, NY,

and Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery in Otego, NY.

On Thursday, His Beatitude was welcomed to the Monasteries of New Skete by Igumen Christopher (Savage), the male monastery's superior. New Skete, which is made up of both male and female monastic communities, is well known for breeding of German shepherd dogs, world-renowned dog training, and popular cheesecakes.

Prior to lunch with both the monks and nuns, Fr. Christopher led a tour of the male monastic quarters, where an extensive renovation was recently completed. The project, necessary due to water infiltration of the aging structure, allowed the monastery to update monastic cells, adding individual heating and air conditioning units, new bathroom facilities, and wheelchair accessibility.

The Sixth Hour was chanted in the Church of the Transfiguration before His Beatitude met with Sister Cecelia (Harvey), superior of the nun's community. His Beatitude then met with all the monastics together, spending much of the afternoon informally discussing a broad range of topics with the community.

On Friday, His Beatitude's visit to Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery began with the celebration of the Ninth Hour, Typika, and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Concelebrating with His Beatitude was Archpriest Jason Vansuch, rector of St. George Church in Buffalo, NY, and monastery board member. The responses were sung by the monastics.

Following a lenten meal, His Beatitude toured the monastery property and received updates on the animals cared for by the sisterhood and the condition of the structures. He also met with Mother Raphaela (Wilkinson), the monastery's abbess, for a general report on the state of the community.

As part of his emphasis on the nurturing of monastic vocations within the Church, His Beatitude encourages men and women to prayerfully discern their potential calling to the monastic life and asks that our parishes and communities consider supporting the many monasteries of the Orthodox Church in America by undertaking pilgrimages and providing financial support.

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## Great Thursday con't from Pg 6

The liturgy of Holy Thursday includes: a) Matins, b) Vespers and, following Vespers, the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. In the Cathedral Churches the special service of the Washing of Feet takes place after the Liturgy; while the deacon reads the Gospel, the Bishop washes the feet of twelve priests, reminding us that Christ's love is the foundation of life in the Church and shapes all relations within it. It is also on Holy Thursday that Holy Chrism is consecrated by the primates of autocephalous Churches, and this also means that the new love of Christ is the gift we receive from the Holy Spirit on the day of our entrance into the Church.

At Matins the Troparion sets the theme of the day: the opposition between the love of Christ and the "insatiable desire" of Judas.

"When the glorious disciples were illumined by washing at the Supper, Then was the impious Judas darkened with the love of silver And to the unjust judges does he betray Thee, the just Judge. Consider, O Lover of money, him who hanged himself because of it. Do not follow the insatiable desire which dared this against the Master, O Lord, good to all, glory to Thee."

After the Gospel reading (Luke 12:1-40) we are given the contemplation, the mystical and eternal meaning of the Last Supper in the beautiful canon of Saint Cosmas. Its last "irmos," (Ninth Ode) invites us to share in the hospitality of the Lord's banquet:

"Come, O ye faithful Let us enjoy the hospitality of the Lord and the banquet of immortality In the upper chamber with minds uplifted...."

At Vespers, the stichira on "Lord, I have cried" stress the spiritual anticlimax of Holy Thursday, the betrayal of Judas:

"Judas the slave and Knave, The disciple and traitor, The friend and fiend, Was proved by his deeds, For, as he followed the Master, Within himself he contemplated His betrayal...."

After the Entrance, three lessons from the Old Testament:

1) Exodus 19: 10-19. God's descent from Mount Sinai to His people as the image of God's coming in the Eucharist.

2) Job 38:1-23, 42:1-5, God's conversation with Job and Job's answer: "who will utter to me what I understand not? Things too great and wonderful for me, which I knew not..."—and these "great and wonderful things" are fulfilled in the gift of Christ's Body and Blood.

3) Isaiah 50:4-11. The beginning of the prophecies on the suffering servant of God,

The Epistle reading is from I Corinthians 11:23-32:

Saint Paul's account of the Last Supper and the meaning of communion.

The Gospel reading (the longest of the year is taken from all four Gospels and is the full story of the Last Supper, the betrayal of Judas and Christ's arrest in the garden.

The Cherubic hymn and the hymn of Communion are replaced by the words of the prayer before Communion:

"Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant, For I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, Neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss; But like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom."

by The Very Rev. Alexander Schmemmann, S.T.D.  
Professor of Liturgical Theology, Saint Vladimir's Seminary

## Metropolitan Council meets for its Regular Spring 2024 Session

The Regular Spring 2024 Session of the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America was convened via teleconference on Tuesday, March 5, Thursday, March 7, and Thursday, March 28.

The Council met under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and conducted general business reviewing and discussing various reports that were previously submitted in writing and then presented via teleconference.

On Tuesday, March 5, His Beatitude offered an update on his primatial work, offering a detailed log of his significant activities over the past several months. He highlighted his work in his own Archdiocese of Washington where he has now been residing for almost two years. He also offered a few remarks on the recent episcopal ordination and enthronement of His Grace Benedict as the new Bishop of Hartford and the Diocese of New England, whose Diocese was under His Beatitude's locum tenency until early December 2023.

Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, presented his report, which highlighted his activities, travel, and the Chancery's overall work, including personnel matters. Fr. Alexander also spoke on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Religious activities in which the Orthodox Church in America is engaged.

The Property Committee offered an update on the sale of Westwood, and the steps which are following the recent signing of the purchase agreement.

The Council also received the first report of the new General Counsel, Mr. Mark Hamilton of Tucker & Arensberg Attorneys of Pittsburgh, PA. Mr. Hamilton updated the Council on several legal cases. **Con't next Pg**

### **Metropolitan Council con't from previous pg**

Archpriest Alessandro Margheritino, Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, also presented his report, offering updates on various aspects of operations at the Chancery, the work of the Preconciliar Commission, and property management. Fr. Alessandro also noted the recent progress with the relocation of the OCA Archives to the Florovsky Library at Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. At this point, 100% of the sorted Archival collection has been relocated to the Seminary where it is housed in a beautiful and organized space.

Mr. Andrew Smith, Treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America, offered his report in which he reviewed current financials, proposed amendments to the 2024 budget, and the transition from in-house day-to-day accounting to an outsourced accounting solution with Chazin & Company.

On Thursday, Mr. Smith introduced Matushka Sharon Hubiak and Ms. Diane Dorogy, who offered the report of the Internal Auditing Committee. They remarked that, in all areas examined, everything was in good order, with some items and recommendations, most of which are already being addressed. His Beatitude thanked the internal auditors and Mr. Andrew Smith for their diligent work.

The rest of the Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council was dedicated to matters concerning the OCA Pension Plan.

The Council received extensive written reports from the Pension Board and, on March 7, heard a report from the Pension Board represented by Matushka Mary Buletza-Breton, Chair, Archpriest John Dresko, and Ms. Melanie Ringa. Mr. Michael Stieglitz, Pension Plan Administrator, was also in attendance.

The Council received written reports from the new Pension actuarial firm, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company (GRS), and heard a presentation from their representatives, who also showed a modeling tool for projecting the effects of various changes upon the funded status of the plan.

Extensive discussion followed on the state of the Plan, the issue of compliance, and proposed changes to the Pension Plan.

In response to requests raised by the General Counsel, the Metropolitan Council, and the new Actuaries, to clarify definitions, address non-compliance matters, and address the funding status, the Pension Board presented a number of amendments to the Pension Document. Because of limited time, Metropolitan Tikhon directed that the Metropolitan Council reconvene for a third meeting on March 28 to review and consider the proposed amendments carefully. His Beatitude also appointed a working group made of three members of the Metropolitan Council's Pension Committee and three of the Pension Board to review the amendments and make any

necessary changes before the Metropolitan Council meets again. His Beatitude asked Fr. Alessandro to facilitate the work of this ad hoc group.

On March 28, His Beatitude presided at the third meeting of the Metropolitan Council's Spring 2024 Session and asked Matushka Mary to present the four revised amendments to the Council. The Metropolitan Council voted in favor of the first three amendments and asked for more changes to the fourth proposed amendment. Metropolitan Tikhon received the vote of the Council for the first two amendments and referred approval of the third amendment to the Holy Synod that was to be convened the following week.

A more detailed press release on the recently approved amendments will be issued in the coming days.

To conclude the meeting, His Beatitude thanked the Council and the Pension Board for their collaborative work, the extensive and constructive discussions, and their efforts to strengthen the Plan. His Beatitude closed the meeting with prayer.

Minutes and reports from the 2024 Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council will be posted on the OCA website as they become available. The draft minutes and reports will be posted in the coming weeks.

## **The Raising of Lazarus (Lazarus Saturday) / Commemorated on April 27**

Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday

Visible triumphs are few in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ. He preached a kingdom "not of this world." At His nativity in the flesh there was "no room at the inn." For nearly thirty years, while He grew "in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52), He lived in obscurity as "the son of Mary." When He appeared from Nazareth to begin His public ministry, one of the first to hear of Him asked: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). In the end He was crucified between two thieves and laid to rest in the tomb of another man.

Two brief days stand out as sharp exceptions to the above—days of clearly observable triumph. These days are known in the Church today as Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Together they form a unified liturgical cycle which serves as the passage from the forty days of Great Lent to Holy Week. They are the unique and paradoxical days before the Lord's Passion. They are days of visible, earthly triumph, of resurrectional and messianic joy in which Christ Himself is a deliberate and active participant. At the same time they are days which point beyond themselves to an ultimate victory and final kingship which Christ will attain not by raising one dead man or entering a particular city, but by His own imminent suffering, death and resurrection. **Con't Pg 12**

## APRIL FINANCIALS

Expenses	\$9,633.84
Income	\$14,517.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>+\$4,883.16</b>

Weekly Tithe	\$13,107
Weekly Candles	\$217
Weekly Flowers	\$200
Incense	\$25
Eternal Light / Iconostasis	\$100
Pascha Flowers	\$115
Advent Social	\$20
Pascha Offering	\$225
Presanctified Offering	\$208
Unneeded Gifts	\$500

Monthly Charity Income (St. Tikhon's Seminary)  
 ....\$475

### PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(Prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant. *(Prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. *(Prostration)*

O God, cleanse me a sinner. *(12 times)*  
*deep bow, then:*

*Read the entire prayer again with a single prostration at the end.*

#### ***Pension con't from pg 7***

this special meeting began with an educational session led by Mr. David Jarett, a principal and consulting actuary with 35 years of experience in defined benefit pension consulting. The educational session, supplemented by the reports from the Pension Board and the Pension Actuaries, GRS, provided the framework for a thorough discussion on the Pension Plan of the Orthodox Church in America.

I express my sincere gratitude to Your Eminences and Your Graces, and to all who participated in the

## Pascha Flowers

*If you would like to help defray the cost of the flowers, and would like to have your loved one (deceased or in honor) remembered, please see Fr. Andrew. Cost: \$15 per flower.*

#### **Bartek Family:** (12 Flowers)

- ◆ For the Health of my family and friends
- ◆ For the Health of all our parishioners & their families
- ◆ For the Health of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon & His Eminence AB Daniel and the entire Synod and all Orthodox Patriarchs & bishops around the world
- ◆ For the Health and safety of the Campbell Fire & Police Departments
- ◆ For the Health of the City Council and Mayor and all residents of Campbell
- ◆ For the less fortunate of the world who have no one to pray for them
- ◆ For all the military around the world
- ◆ In memory of my ordaining Bishop, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas
- ◆ In memory of my parents George & Dorothy and all my family and friends
- ◆ In memory of all the diptychs of this parish
- ◆ In memory of all the hierarchs of this Diocese & the Carpatho-Russian Diocese
- ◆ For all the military who had given their lives for this country

#### **Fredericks Family:** (1 Flower)

- ◆ In honor of my mom Mary on the occasion of her 94th birthday & for her continued health

#### **Zenko Family:** (2 Flowers)

- ◆ In memory of my mom Charlotte
- ◆ In memory of my Aunt Sue

#### **Johnston Family:** (1 Flower)

- ◆ In memory of George & Mary Vasile & George Robert Vasile

#### **Cvercko Family:** (4 Flowers)

- ◆ In Memory of Andrew Cvercko
- ◆ In Memory of Anna And Andrew Cvercko
- ◆ In Memory of Antonia & Morris Pecuszk
- ◆ In Memory of Olga & Joseph Baldowski

fruitful discussions that were held over those two days. I note with thanksgiving to God that the conversations among the many stakeholders were marked by a spirit of openness, collaboration, and respect. I am confident that such ***Con't Next Pg***

## *Lazarus Con't from pg 10*

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! (Troparion of the Feast, sung on both Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday)

### Lazarus Saturday

In a carefully detailed narrative the Gospel relates how Christ, six days before His own death, and with particular mindfulness of the people “standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me” (John 11:42), went to His dead friend Lazarus at Bethany outside of Jerusalem. He was aware of the approaching death of Lazarus but deliberately delayed His coming, saying to His disciples at the news of His friend’s death: “For your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe” (John 11:14).

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus was already dead four days. This fact is repeatedly emphasized by the Gospel narrative and the liturgical hymns of the feast. The four-day burial underscores the horrible reality of death. Man, created by God in His own image and likeness, is a spiritual-material being, a unity of soul and body. Death is destruction; it is the separation of soul and body. The soul without the body is a ghost, as one Orthodox theologian puts it, and the body without the soul is a decaying corpse. “I weep and I wail, when I think upon death, and behold our beauty, fashioned after the image of God, lying in the tomb dishonored, disfigured, bereft of form.” This is a hymn of Saint John of Damascus sung at the Church’s burial services. This “mystery” of death is the inevitable fate of man fallen from God and blinded by his own prideful pursuits.

With epic simplicity the Gospel records that, on coming to the scene of the horrible end of His friend, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). At this moment Lazarus, the friend of Christ, stands for all men, and Bethany is the mystical center of the world. Jesus wept as He saw the “very good” creation and its king, man, “made through Him” (John 1:3) to be filled with joy, life and light, now a burial ground in which man is sealed up in a tomb outside the city, removed from the fullness of life for which he was created, and decomposing in darkness, despair and death. Again as the Gospel says, the people were hesitant to open the tomb, for “by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days” (John 11:39).

When the stone was removed from the tomb, Jesus prayed to His Father and then cried with a loud voice: “Lazarus, come out.” The icon of the feast shows the particular moment when Lazarus appears at the entrance to the tomb. He is still wrapped in his grave clothes and his friends, who are holding their

noses because of the stench of his decaying body, must unwrap him. In everything stress is laid on the audible, the visible and the tangible. Christ presents the world with this observable fact: on the eve of His own suffering and death He raises a man dead four days! The people were astonished. Many immediately believed on Jesus and a great crowd began to assemble around Him as the news of the raising of Lazarus spread. The regal entry into Jerusalem followed.

Lazarus Saturday is a unique day: on a Saturday a Matins and Divine Liturgy bearing the basic marks of festal, resurrectional services, normally proper to Sundays, are celebrated. Even the baptismal hymn is sung at the Liturgy instead of Holy God: “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”

Very Rev. Paul Lazor

### *Pension Plan con't from previous pg*

a spirit will continue to guide us as we work together to address the challenges ahead.

Without a doubt, the Pension Plan has been a major point of discussion in our Church at all levels, and I anticipate this will remain the case for the coming years. This is not only because the subject of clergy and Church lay workers’ retirement is a significant one but also because we have all openly acknowledged that the financial health and future viability of the Plan require urgent implementation of corrective measures from the various stakeholders in our Church.

Our discussions last week were enriched by the very valuable perspectives provided by the actuaries, the ad hoc group I appointed to work on the proposed amendments to the Pension Document, the legal counsel of Mr. Mark Hamilton, and the various reports received. From those presentations, it seems clear that stabilizing the Plan is our primary goal in the immediate future. However important they are, any significant conversations regarding alternative retirement vehicles and possible structural changes to our current Plan are contingent on stabilizing the funding status of the Pension Plan.

Based on the expert advice provided by the actuaries and Mr. Jarret, it is evident that stabilizing the Plan will require even greater efforts on our part to achieve the necessary participation levels among those eligible to participate. As we saw from the projecting tool presented by GRS, while cash infusions will help, the most determining factor for stabilizing the Plan is increasing participation itself.

Upon the proposal of the Pension Board and the revision of the ad hoc group I appointed, the Metropolitan Council approved three important amendments to the Pension Document to address a number of different issues, ranging from clarification of definitions to compliance and funding needs. I received the vote of the **Con't Next pg**

### *Pension con't from previous Pg*

Metropolitan Council on March 28 for the first two amendments. The Holy Synod, to whom I had referred the confirmation of the third vote, approved the third amendment on April 2.

For your convenience, I am attaching the text of the three amendments that you have already received with other documents and reports for our recent meeting. However, I want to take the opportunity to highlight some significant clarifications and changes:

\*All age-eligible priests and bishops of the Church are required to participate in the Pension Plan regardless of whether they have secular employment and regardless of the amount of their stipend or salary from the parishes where they are assigned.

\*The exception to the above is for priests in the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska. Priests from this Diocese who are already in the Plan do not fall under this exception.

\*Priests working at a mission or mission station who do not receive compensation are not mandated to participate in the Plan.

\*All full-time lay employees of the Church (including of parishes, organizations of parishes, dioceses, seminaries, etc.) are mandated to participate in the Plan.

\*The determination of compensation is made without regard to whether the employee is issued a Federal Form W-2 or a Form 1099, or any other form of reporting.

\*The new definition of "Non-Compliant Eligible Member" refers to any employee who is eligible and received compensation but who fails to participate in the Plan as an active member because he or she fails to execute the member contribution authorization form.

\*A member who fails to continue as an active member by not contributing, after a period of 120 days and following three written notices, shall forfeit any benefit derived from Employer and Member Contributions and shall only be entitled to the return of his/her Member Voluntary Contributions. This member will then be terminated from the Plan.

\*Starting January 1, 2025, each Employer shall make an Employer Contribution to the Plan for each Inactive Member, Ineligible Member, and Non-Compliant Eligible Member equal to fourteen percent (14%) of the Member's Compensation on a monthly basis. This means that parishes and institutions with aged-out employees and employees who refuse to participate in the Plan are still mandated to remit 14% of the employee's compensation to the Pension Plan.

As I have discussed with both the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod, these changes will require the support of the many stakeholders involved. This is especially true when it comes to ensuring compliance

and mandatory participation. The delayed effective date of January 1, 2025 is intended to give everyone the time necessary to evaluate and prepare for the impact of the additional participation and contribution requirements. To this end, I am sending copies of this letter to members of the Metropolitan Council, Diocesan Chancellors, and the Pension Board, because all of us have to work in concert with regard to the Plan.

I am aware that we must also acknowledge a problem with the perception of the Plan structure and current funding status, especially from our younger priests and some of our parish councils, who may have hesitations about the future of the Plan. I am sensitive to these concerns that my office has received over the past few years. In fact, some of the strong concerns expressed three years ago have allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the Plan which has led us to today. I also acknowledge that we are currently bearing the weight of past decisions and unsatisfactory participation levels.

While I acknowledge the concerns, I must unequivocally state that non-compliance is not the answer. Choosing not to adhere to the mandate that we ourselves have approved as a Church when gathered together as an All-American Council contributes to the deterioration of the Plan. We are one Church and each of us is a member of the one Church of Christ. We act in accordance with the Body and not as individuals, just as the Apostle Paul encourages us to do, "that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor 1:10).

Once again, I am grateful for the encouraging discussion and commitment expressed at our recent joint meeting, as well as the support of the Holy Synod for the pension amendments previously approved by the Metropolitan Council. I look forward to receiving updates from the Pension Board on the fruits of these discussions and the renewed commitment by the Metropolitan Council and Holy Synod. As such, I would urge you and your chancellors to communicate accordingly with your parishes so to ensure full compliance with the mandates we have blessed.

Yours in Christ,

+TIKHON  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

*Thank You*

Thank you to all who have attempted to come to the services during the Fast, tried to follow the Fast and have a better relationship w/ God. If you have not started, you have Holy Week & Pascha to start. Come pray with us and start to have a better relationship with our God. May God Bless you all with your spiritual attempts.  
V.R. Andrew Bartek, Your Rector