



# The Weekly Forerunner



St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

*MARCH Bulletin Sponsor– In Memory of my ordaining Bishop  
His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas – Given by AP Andrew Bartek*

## Liturgical & Events Schedule

### Sunday, March 23

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Choir Rehearsal / Social

5:00 PM: Deanery Akathist @ St. Nicholas in Mentor

### Monday, March 24

9:00 AM: Lenten Hours & Morning Prayers

### Tuesday, March 25

6:00 PM: Vespers Divine Liturgy / Lenten Fish  
Dinner (RSVP to Nancy)

### Wednesday, March 26

6:00 PM: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy / Social / Lenten  
Talk by Sub-deacon Donald

### Thursday, March 27

9:00 AM: Lenten Hours & Morning Prayers

### Friday, March 28

6:00 PM: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy / Social / Lenten talk  
by Sub-deacon Donald

### Saturday, March 29

5:00 PM: Akathist to the Deceased / The reading of  
the Diptychs of the parish

6:00 PM: Vespers

### Sunday, March 30

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 PM: Divine Liturgy / Social / Choir Rehearsal

5:00 PM: Clergy Association Vespers here

## MONTHLY CHARITY FOR 2025

January: *OCMC*: \$900 + \$300 from the church  
**Total \$1,200**

February: *CA Fire Relief*: \$524 + \$300 from the  
Church **Total \$824**

## CONFESSIONS

Please make an appointment to come to Confession during the times posted.

Confessions will be heard -

- ♦ before and after Vespers and all Lenten Services (except Pre-Sanctified Liturgy).
- ♦ only be heard before the Pre-sanctified Liturgy.

The last day for confessions will be Lazarus Saturday Pre-Sanctified Liturgy.

## PRAYER OF SAINT EPHREM

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

But give rather the Spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

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. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

O God, cleanse me a sinner (12 deep bows)

*Then:*

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(No Prostration)*

But give rather the Spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(No 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. Amen. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

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

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

### Archbishop Daniel joins Local Chicago Hierarchs for Orthodoxy Sunday

His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest partook in the annual Chicagoland observance of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. Services were held at Holy Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, Chicago, IL, Sunday, March 9.

His Eminence joined local hierarchs, clergy, and faithful from around Chicagoland, which welcomed the Bishop of Sitka and Alaska, His Grace Alexei. As previously reported, His Grace was the homilist for Orthodoxy Sunday and offered a retreat to the clergy the next day.

On Monday, March 10, Archbishop Daniel hosted the clergy retreat at the Diocesan Cathedral, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL. The retreat covered the topic of “thoughts” and “Isaiah as the Fifth Gospel.”

### Great and Holy Friday / Commemorated on April 18

#### Great and Holy Friday

On Great and Holy Friday, Christ died on the Cross. He gave up His spirit with the words: “It is finished” (John 19:30). These words are better understood when rendered: “It is consummated.” He had accomplished the work for which His heavenly Father had sent Him into the world. He became a man in the fullest sense of the word. He accepted the baptism of repentance from John in the Jordan River. He assumed the whole human condition, experiencing all its alienation, agony, and suffering, concluding with the lowly death on the Cross. He perfectly fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

“Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he has poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:12)

#### The Man of Sorrows

On the Cross Jesus thus became “the man of sorrows; acquainted with grief” whom the prophet Isaiah had foretold. He was “despised and forsaken by men” and “smitten by God, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:3-4). He became the one with “no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2). His appearance was “marred beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men” (Isaiah 52:14). All these Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus as he hung from the Cross.

As the end approached, He cried: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). This cry indicated His complete identification with the human condition. He had totally embraced the despised, forsaken and smitten condition of suffering and death—alienation *Con’t Next Page*

## PRAYER LIST

**PARISHIONERS:** Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Helen Colaluca / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Gianna Hryb / Sue Kennedy / Heidi Kuzemchak / Matushka Helen Psinka / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Melanie Yannitto / Marion Zwinski

**HIERARCHS & CLERGY:** AB Alexander from Dallas / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Michael Rustic / AP Emil Hutyan / Fr. Deacon James Hryb / Fr. Matthew Nyumu & his family & parish

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Diane Caban (Sirilla) / George Caban (Sirilla) / Donna Chiarelli / Karen Debiec / Paul Demkosky (Fr.) / Trudy Ellmore / John Galapin (Fr.) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Bruce Harris (Sabol) / Paula Kennedy / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Mea Mahan / Mary Mahan / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raisa (Nicoloff) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Diane Ruff / Julia Shirilla / Bob Smrek (Sirilla) / Jeff Stokly (Fr.) / Emilia Yanitto / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Brian (Shirilla) / David (Willison) / Drew (Willison) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Ellen (Clark) / Ellen (Kessler) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Karen (Vansuch) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Katie (Garrity) / Paul (Kolesar) / Paula (Voytilla) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Richard (Tusinac)

**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 & Metropolitan Arseny imprisoned / 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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### *Holy Fri. con't from previous pg*

from God. He was truly the man of sorrows.

Yet, it is important to note that Jesus' cry of anguish from the Cross was not a sign of His loss of faith in His Father. The words which He exclaimed are the first verse of Psalm 22, a messianic Psalm. The first part of the Psalm foretells the anguish, suffering and death of the Messiah. The second part is a song of praise to God. It predicts the final victory of the Messiah.

### **The Formal Charges**

The death of Christ had been sought by the religious leaders in Jerusalem from the earliest days of His public ministry. The formal charges made against Him usually fell into the following two categories:

- 1) violation of the Law of the Old Testament, e.g., breaking the Sabbath rest;
- 2) blasphemy: making Himself equal with God.

Matters were hastened (consummated) by the moment of truth which followed His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He had the people behind Him. He spoke plainly. He said that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. He chastised the scribes and Pharisees for reducing religion to a purely external affair;

"You are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matthew 23:27-28).

It was the second formal charge; however, that became the basis for His conviction.

### **The Religious Trial**

Christ's conviction and death sentence required two trials: religious and political. The religious trial was first and took place during the night immediately after His arrest. After considerable difficulty in finding witnesses for the prosecution who actually agreed in their testimony, Caiaphas, the high priest, asked Jesus the essential question: "Are you Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus, who had remained silent to this point, now responded directly:

"I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61-62).

Jesus' reply recalled the many other statements He had made beginning with the words, "I am." "I am the bread of life . . . I am the light of the world. . . I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . before Abraham was, I am." (John 6 through 15). The use of these words themselves was considered blasphemous by the religious leaders. The words were the Name of God. By using them as His own Name, Jesus positively identified Himself with God. From the burning bush the voice of God had disclosed these words to Moses as the Divine Name:

"Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:13-14).

Now Jesus, as He had done on many other occasions, used them as His own Name. The high priest immediately tore his mantle and "they all condemned Him as deserving death" (Mark 14:64). In their view He had violated the Law of the Old Testament:

"He who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall be put to death" (Leviticus 24:16). **Con't Pg 6**

## APRIL Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

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

**Bulletin:** In memory of my Godfather Andrew – Given by AP Andrew Bartek

**Wine:**

**Incense:**

**Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light:** In memory of: George and Mary Vasile George Robert Vasile– Given by IJim & Elaine Johnston / In loving memory of parents Nicholas & Mark K. Libertin—Given by Charissa & Tom Oliphant

**Altar Candles:** In memory of George Kolesar- Given by Reader Nick & Monica Vansuch / In lovinr memory of brother Dr. Nick Libertin- Given by Charissa & Tom Oliphant

**Tetrapod Candles:** In memory of my parents George & Marie Gresko- given by Mary Gresko

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

**St. Panteleimon Icon Candles:**

**Protection Icon Candles:**

**St. John the Baptist Candles:**

**Flowers:** In memory of my mother Dorothy on the occasion of her 89 Birthday– Given by AP Andrew Bartek

<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</b> - \$50 for 2 weeks at a time– <i>Updated</i>
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

### March Celebrations

#### *Birthday*

- 2- Lori Batura
- 4- Kaitlyn Kuzemchak
- 6- AP John Steffaro
- 9- Kevin Koval
- 11- Cindy Ferrick
- 14- Reader Matthew Vansuch
- 15- Natalia Simko / Patty Tubic
- 16- Paul Bojan / Claudia Zile / Diana Konik
- 18- Thomas Zelinsky
- 17- Christine Koval
- 20- Gianna Hryb / Jacob Hryb
- 22- Helena Kalantzis
- 24- Anne Jesko
- 25- Ephraimia Andrews
- 28- Tracy Rusnak / Dennis Tubic
- 30- Tom Hull

#### *Anniversary*

NONE

#### *Names Day*

- 4- AB Daniel of Chicago & the Diocese of the mid-west / His Grace Bishop Gerasim of Forth Worth
- 10- Patty Thompson
- 14- His Grace Bishop Benedict of Hartford & New England / 17- AB Alejo of Mexico City & Mexico / His Grace Bishop Alexis of Sitka & Alaska
- 30- Beth Hull / Elizabeth Willison

### MARCH FINANCIALS

Expenses	\$11,093.57
Income	\$11,413.17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$319.60</b>
Weekly Tithe	\$9,537.70
Weekly Candles	\$542.00
Tetrapod Candles	\$50.00
Icon Screen / Eternal Light Candles	\$50.00
Incense	\$30.00
Wine	\$40.00
Protection Candles	\$30.00
St. Panteleimon Candles	\$30.00
St. John the Baptist Candles	\$30.00
Sisterhood Donation	\$125.00
Paschal Flowers	\$285.00
Weekly Flowers	\$50.00
Bulletin	\$50.00
Cemetery Reimbursement	\$563.47
Monthly Charity Collection: Deanery	\$424.00

### 40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

April 13- George Fischer



## APRIL Reposed List

- 1- Andy Basala (1982)
- 1- Andreas Basala (1923)
- 1- Michael Miaz (1987) ©
- 2- Julia Konik (1986) ©
- 2- Katherine Garman Leshinsky (2020) ©
- 2- Anthonis Kaubouris (1954) ©
- 3- Michael Tarasek (1997) ©
- 3- Alesis Libertin (1939) ©
- 3- Rudolph Puharich (1996) ©
- 4- Rose Bartek (1986)
- 4- Matthew Kollar (grandfather)
- 5- Michael Boldish (1998) ©
- 5- Mary Libertin Weaver (2019) ©
- 5- Anne Billik (2010) ©
- 5- Mary Andrasko (1936) ©
- 5- Christopher Garcia (1996) ©
- 6- John Sabol (2017)
- 6- Joseph Kornyak (1951) ©
- 7- Emanuel Handikaris (1929) ©
- 7- Angela Angelides (1960) ©
- 8- Anna Hamney (1982) ©
- 8- Michael Sveda (1982) ©
- 9- Thomas Harvischak (2017) ©
- 9- Anna Kalas (1952) ©
- 10- Robert Banas (2019) ©
- 10- Frank Boldish (1940) ©
- 11- Archbishop John (1982)
- 11- Ann Konik Voytilla (2022) ©
- 12- Sub-deacon George Gresko (2015) ©
- 12- Marie Gresko Fedak (2015) ©
- 12- Charles Rich (2002) ©
- 12- Michael Shubeliak (1943) ©
- 12- Emanuel Ellinos (1945) ©
- 13- Michael Pikos (1960) ©
- 14- Luba Despotovich (1936) ©
- 14- Peter Magriplis (1937) ©
- 14- Matushka Carol Steffaro (2023)
- 16- Catherine Pavlick (2004) ©
- 17- Mary Maximor (1981) ©
- 17- Joseph Macala (1954) ©
- 18- Alex Alesoff (1925) ©
- 18- Michael Kalas (1944) ©
- 19- Wasil Nosik (1985) ©
- 19- Theodore Liszka (2019) ©
- 19- Kosta George (1931) ©
- 21- Vitaly Kaliscak (1940) ©
- 22- George Vasile (1997) ©
- 22- Thaddeus Puskarcik Jr (2007) ©
- 22- Geraldine Sokol (2010) ©
- 22- Michael Ivancko (1956) ©
- 22- Michael Hastal (1960) ©
- 23- Anna Basala (1994)
- 23- Nikita Patzakis (1925) ©
- 24- Fr. Stephen Dutko (2009)
- 24- His Eminence Archbishop Paul (2022)
- 24- Olga Buly (2011) ©
- 24- Anna Salber (1921) ©
- 24- Anthony Spirtos (1951) ©
- 24- Michael Hamulas (1956) ©
- 25- Mary Timkovich (1975) ©
- 25- Mary Andras (2002) ©
- 28- Alan Andras (2002) ©
- 28- Bessie Pangere (1958) ©
- 29- John Dunchak (2001) ©
- 29- Nicholas Dushan (1924) ©
- 29- John Malutic (1928) ©
- 29- Tim Nolder (2023)
- 30- Sevasti Tsaknis (1930) ©
- 30- George Libertin (1939) ©

### 3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of the Cross Commemorated on March 23

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).

### Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek";

**March CHARITY**  
For the Cleveland Deanery

## 2025 COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Nancy Tusinac, President  
(Sub-committee Chairman for all social events)  
Phone- 724-456-7366
- Cindy Ferrick, Treasurer  
(Sub-committee Chairman of the Sunshine Club)  
Phone 330-531-1119
- Joann Sirilla, Financial Secretary  
(Sub-committee Chairman on all fundraisers)  
Phone 330-881-6775
- Sub-deacon Dr. Donald Tamulouis, Vice President  
(Sub-committee Chairman on all Maintenance issues). He will be working with Michael Simko  
Phone 330-774-8860
- Sherrie Fredericks, Secretary  
(Sub-committee Chairman on sending articles & pictures of events to the Diocese)  
Phone: 330-881-5087
- Natalia Simko, Council Member  
(Sub-committee Chairman on all Cemetery issues)  
Phone- 330-980-3033
- David Konik, Council Member  
(Sub-committee Chairman on Welcoming Cmte)  
Phone: 330-717-6714
- David Dionisio, Council Member  
(Sub-committee Chairman on all organizational issues in the church (including safety issues)  
Phone: 425-241-7825
- Maintenance Issues:  
Michael Simko - 330-565-0084  
Michael Centofanti - 330-544-3518

## NEW COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

You will note, each Council member is in charge of keeping order in their respective areas. If there are any issues in a particular area, please contact the responsible Council member.

They are responsible to find a solution to the reported issue. That may include seeking your or another person's help. This will allow more organized response and avoid one person being burdened with everything.

Sunshine Club – This new club is responsible for sending out birthday, anniversary and get well cards.

## *Holy Friday con't from pg 3*

### **The Political Trial**

The Jewish religious leaders lacked the actual authority to carry out the above law: to put a man to death. Such authority belonged to the Roman civil administration. Jesus had carefully kept His activity free of political implications. He refused the temptation of Satan to rule the kingdoms of the world by the sword (Luke 4: 1-12). He often charged His disciples and others to tell no one that He was , the Christ, because of the political overtones that this title carried for many (Matthew 16: 13-20). He rebuked Peter, calling him Satan, when the disciple hinted at His swerving from the true nature of His mission (Matthew 16:23). To Pilate, the spineless and indifferent Roman Governor, He said plainly: “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). Jesus was not a political revolutionary who came to free the people from Roman control and establish a new kingdom based on worldly power.

Nevertheless, the religious leaders, acting in agreement with the masses, devised political charges against Him in order to get their way. They presented Christ to the Romans as a political , leader, the “King of the Jews” in a worldly sense, a threat to Roman rule and a challenge to Caesar. Pilate became fearful of his own position as he heard the charges and saw the seething mobs. Therefore, despite his avowed testimony to Jesus’ innocence, he passed formal sentence, “washed his hands” of the matter, and turned Jesus over to be crucified (John 19:16).

### **Crucifixion—The Triumph of Evil**

Before succumbing to this cruel Roman method of executing political criminals, Jesus suffered still other injustices. He was stripped, mocked and beaten. He wore a “kingly” crown of thorns on His head. He carried His own cross. He was finally nailed to the cross between two thieves at a place called Golgotha (the place of the skull) outside Jerusalem. An inscription was placed above His head on the Cross to indicate the nature of His crime: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” He yielded up His spirit at about the ninth hour (3 p.m.), after hanging on the Cross for about six hours.

On Holy Friday evil triumphed. “It was night” (John 13:30) when Judas departed from the Last Supper to complete his act of betrayal, and “there was darkness over all the land” (Matthew 27:45) when Jesus was hanging on the Cross. The evil forces of this world had been massed against Christ. Unjust trials convicted Him. A criminal was released to the people instead of Him. Nails and a spear pierced His body. Bitter vinegar was given to Him to quench His thirst. Only one disciple remained faithful to Him. Finally, the tomb of another man became His place of repose after death.

The innocent Jesus was put to death on the basis of both religious and political charges. Both Jews and Gentile Romans participated in His death sentence.

“The rulers of the people have assembled **Con't next pg**

<b>ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - MARCH</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>1st Week</b>		
Vespers	8	8
Liturgy	67 / 44	50 / 30
Forgiveness Vesper	34	43
Canon— Monday	17	26
Canon Tuesday	25	16
Canon Wednesday	18	27
Canon Thursday	22	21
Pre-Sanctified	29 / 18	31 / 17
<b>2nd Week</b>		
Vespers	11	13
Orthodox Liturgy	60 / 37	64 / 41
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	32 / 23	43 / 25
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	32 / 18	28 / 21
<b>3rd Week</b>		
Vespers	17	13
St Gregory Liturgy	64 / 47	43 / 29
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	38 / 24	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	23 / 16	
<b>4th Week</b>		
Vespers	19	
Cross Liturgy	70 / 55	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	37 / 25	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	25 / 15	
Soul Sat. Akathist	13	
<b>5th week</b>		
Vespers	10	
St. John Liturgy	70 / 55	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	28 / 20	
Full Canon	13	
Fri. Akathist	30	

### **SOCIALS FOR MARCH**

**March 23** In Memory of Sub-deacon William Livosky by Linda Livosky

**March 30** Altar Society / Evening Social by the Church

**NOTE:** ‘O’ Club Kolachi Baking (March 31-April 5)

### **Holy Fri. con’t from previous pg**

against the Lord and His Christ.” (Psalm 2—the Prokeimenon of the Holy Thursday Vespers Liturgy)

We, also, in many ways continue to participate in the death sentence given to Christ. The formal charges outlined above do not exhaust the reasons for the crucifixion. Behind the formal charges lay a host of injustices brought, on by hidden and personal motivations. Jesus openly spoke the truth about God and man. He thereby exposed the false character of the righteousness and smug security, both religious and material, claimed by many especially those in high places. The constantly occurring expositions of such smugness in our own day teach us the truly illusory nature of much so-called righteousness and security. In the deepest sense, the death of Christ was brought about by hardened, personal sin—the refusal of people to change themselves in the light of reality, which is Christ.

“He came to His very own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11).

Especially we, the Christian people, are Christ’s very own. He continues to come to us in His Church. Each time we attempt to make the Church into something other than the eternal coming of Christ into our midst, each time we refuse to repent for our wrongs; we, too, reject Christ and participate in His death sentence.

#### **The Vespers**

The Vespers, celebrated in the Church on Holy Friday afternoon, brings to mind all of the final events of the life of Christ as mentioned above: the trial, the sentence, the scourging and mocking, the crucifixion, the death, the taking down of His body from the Cross, and the burial. As the hymnography indicates, these events remain ever-present in the Church; they constitute the today of its life.

The service is replete with readings from Scripture: three from the Old Testament and two from the New. The first of the Old Testament readings, from Exodus, speaks of Moses beholding the “back” of the glory of God—for no man can see the glory of God face to face and live. The Church uses this reading to emphasize that now, in the crucifixion and death of Christ, God is making the ultimate condescension to reveal His glory to man—from within man himself.

The death of Christ was of a wholly voluntary character. He dies not because of some necessity in His being: as the Son of God He has life in Himself! Yet, He voluntarily gave up His life as the greatest sign of God’s love for man, as the ultimate revelation of the Divine glory:

“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

The vesperal hymnography further develops the fact that God reveals His glory to us in this condescending love. The Crucifixion is the heart of such love, for the One being crucified is none other than He through whom all things have been created: **Con’t next pg**

### *Holy Fri. con't from previous pg*

Today the Master of creation stands before Pilate. Today the Creator of all is condemned to die on the cross. . . The Redeemer of the world is slapped on the face. The Maker of all is mocked by His own servants. Glory to Thy condescension, O Lover of man! (Verse on "Lord I call", and the Apostikha)

The verses also underscore the cosmic dimensions of the event taking place on the Cross. Just as God who revealed Himself to Moses is not a god, but the God of "heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible," so the death of Jesus is not the culmination of a petty struggle in the domestic life of Palestine. Rather, it is the very center of the epic struggle between God and the Evil One, involving the whole universe:

All creation was changed by fear when it saw Thee hanging on the cross, O Christ! The sun was darkened, and the foundations of the earth were shaken. All things suffered with the Creator of all. O Lord, who didst willingly endure this for us, glory to Thee! (Verse I on "Lord, I Call")

The second Reading from the Old Testament (Job 42:12 to the end) manifests Job as a prophetic figure of the Messiah Himself. The plight of Job is followed in the services throughout Holy Week, and is concluded with this reading. Job is the righteous servant who remains faithful to God despite trial, humiliation, and the loss of all his possessions and family. Because of his faithfulness, however, "The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning" (Job 42: 12)

The third of the Old Testamental readings is by far the most substantial (Isaiah 52:13 to 54:1). It is a prototype of the Gospel itself. Read at this moment, it positively identifies Jesus of Nazareth as the Suffering Servant, the Man of Sorrows; the Messiah of Israel.

The Epistle Reading (I Corinthians 1:18 to 2:2) speaks of Jesus crucified, a folly for the world, as the real center of our Faith. The Gospel reading, a lengthy composite taken from Matthew, Luke and John, simply narrates all the events associated with the crucifixion and burial of Christ.

All the readings obviously focus on the theme of hope. As the Lord of Glory, the fulfillment of the righteous Job, and the Messiah Himself, humiliation and death will have no final hold over Jesus. Even the parental mourning of Mary is transformed in the light of this hope:

When she who bore Thee without seed saw Thee suspended upon the Tree, O Christ, the Creator and God of all, she cried bitterly: "Where is the beauty of Thy countenance, my Son? I cannot bear to see Thee unjustly crucified. Hasten and arise, that I too may see Thy resurrection from the dead on the third day! (Verse IV on "Lord I call.")

Near the end of Vespers, the priest vests fully in dark

vestments. At the appointed time he lifts the Holy Shroud, a large icon depicting Christ lying in the tomb, from the altar table. Together with selected laymen and servers, a procession is formed and the Holy Shroud is carried to a specially prepared tomb in the center of the church. As the procession moves, the troparion is sung:

The Noble Joseph, when he had taken down Thy most pure body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb.

At this ultimate solemn moment of Vespers, the theme of hope once again occurs—this time more strongly and clearly than ever. As knees are bent and heads are bowed, and often tears are shed, another troparion is sung which penetrates through this triumph of evil, to the new day which is contained in its very midst:

The Angel came to the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb and said: "Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.

A new Age is dawning. Our salvation is taking place. The One who died is the same One who will rise on the third day, to "trample down death by death," and to free us from corruption.

Therefore, at the conclusion of Holy Friday Vespers, at the end of this long day of darkness, when all things are apparently ended, our eternal hope for salvation springs forth. For Christ is indeed a stranger to corruption:

"As by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (I Cor. 15:21-32)

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." (Mark 8:35)

- Father Paul Lazor

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### **Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)**

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."



## His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Sends Letter of Congratulations to His Eminence Metropolitan John

On March 17, 2025, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon sent a letter of Congratulations to His Eminence Metropolitan John, newly elected as Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës, and All Albania.

Your Eminence, dear brother and concelebrant in the Lord's Mysteries,

I write to congratulate you on your election as Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës, and All Albania.

The calling to primatial ministry is always humbling, both because the primatial office is lofty and because primatial responsibilities are heavy. That your predecessor, His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of blessed memory, carried out his ministry with so much faithfulness, so much zeal, so much love, only underscores the greatness of the task set before you.

I am confident, however, that, as you accept the primacy of the Albanian Orthodox Church from the hand of Christ himself, you can always rely on the example and instruction of your departed predecessor and teacher, as well as the experience and intercessions of all the holy hierarchs and all the saints. Finally, please be assured of my prayers for you, my brother, as you assume the Archiepiscopal Throne of Tirana, Durrës, and All Albania.

I pray for you, and I pray that the good relations between the Albanian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America might remain strong and, indeed, grow stronger in the years to come, as we always seek to find areas for cooperation for the sake of the proclamation of the Gospel and the building up of the unity of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Once more, please accept my fraternal love and congratulations, and may God grant you many blessed years as the Archbishop of All Albania.

Your brother in Christ,

+Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



## PASCHAL FLOWERS

If you would like to help in the cost of the Paschal flowers and have your loved one remembered during the Paschal Divine Liturgy the cost will be \$20 per flower. Please give the names to Father Andrew and the money to Cindy.

### Fr. Andrew: (10 Flowers)

- ◆ For the health of the parishioners and their families and to the retired priest Archpriest John and Archpriest Andrew
- ◆ For the Health of my family and friends
- ◆ For the Health of our Hierarchs; His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, His Eminence Archbishop Daniel and the entire Synod and all Orthodox Bishops throughout the world
- ◆ For the Health of all first responders in this country and this community especially Chief Stephen, David, Evan, Greg, Bryan, Rob, Steve & Nicholas
- ◆ For the Health of the Mayor and City council and all residents and businesses in Campbell
- ◆ For all the lonely, depressed and less fortunate of this world and this community
- ◆ In Memory of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, my ordaining Bishop and His Eminence Metropolitan Orestas, His Grace Bishop John, His Grace Bishop Matthias, His Eminence Archbishop Job and His Eminence archbishop Paul & for His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman and His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosios.
- ◆ In memory of my parents George and Dorothy and all my family and friends
- ◆ In memory of all the diptychs of this parish
- ◆ In memory of the departed priests who severed this parish: The Reverend Theodore, The Reverend Daniel, The Reverend Joseph, The Reverend Isadore, The Reverend Peter, The Reverend Michael, The Reverend Nicholas, The V.R. Michael, The V.R. Nicholas, The V.R. John.

### March / April 2025 Reader Schedule

March 23– Robert Willison  
March 30– George Horodnic Jr.  
April 6– Deacon Jimmy Hyrb  
April 13– Deacon David Gemmel  
April 20– Sub-deacon Donald Tamulonis  
April 27– Natalia Simko