

# **Saint Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church**

(Saint Mary's Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, Inc.)

On the Corner of East 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Second Avenue

Father Edward G. Cimbala, MAOL, D.Min. ~ Pastor

Boris Derow ~ Music Director/Cantor

Parish Office

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*March 24, 2024  
Flowery / Palm  
Sunday*

## LITURGICAL SERVICES

**Sunday, March 24**

**10:00 AM**

**Palm/Flowery Sunday**

with the Blessing  
of Willows and Palms

Festal Anointing

Service of Holy Anointing

+John & Mary Ruschak

by Margie Ruschak

**Monday, March 25**

**6:00 PM**

**Feast of the Annunciation  
of the Theotokos**

For the Parish Families of St.  
Mary's and Holy Cross

**Thursday, March 28**

**Great and Holy Thursday**

**6:00 PM**

**Vespers and Divine Liturgy**

**For the Priests of the  
Eparchy of Passaic**

**Friday, March 29**

**Good Friday**

**3:00 PM**

**Vespers and Burial  
Procession**

**Sunday, March 31**

**Easter Sunday - 10:00 AM**

**Resurrection Matins**

**and Divine Liturgy**

**For the Parish Families of  
St. Mary's and Holy Cross**

**Festal Anointing**

**Followed by the Blessing  
of Baskets**

**Monday, April 1**

**Bright Monday**

**6:00 PM**

Divine Liturgy

and Gospel Procession

For the Parish Families  
of St. Mary's and Holy Cross

**Sunday, April 7**

**10:00 AM**

**Thomas Sunday**

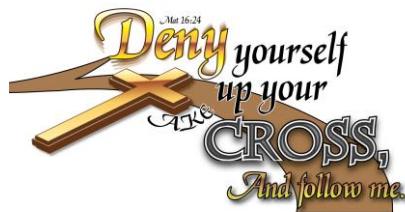
Festal Anointing

Service of Holy Anointing

Special Intention

**Mystery of  
Reconciliation**

Fr. Ed is always available to  
celebrate the Mystery of  
Reconciliation before the  
Divine Liturgy and at any  
other time. If Fr. Ed is not in  
the confessional, please look  
for him; he will gladly help  
you. Fr. Ed will be available  
before and after every service  
during Holy Week.



## **WELCOME VISITORS!**

**“MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER  
FOR ALL PEOPLES.”** - Isaiah 56: 7

If you are a visitor to St. Mary's, we want you to know how welcome you are, whether you have come from another part of the country, from across the world, or simply from another parish. We hope you find our worship true and reverent and that our people here are friendly and cordial. If you seek a spiritual home, we would be honored by your presence in our family. For more information about becoming a parishioner, please see Fr. Ed.

**PILGRIMAGE TO FATIMA & LOURDES  
FEATURING SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA**

**11 DAYS: OCTOBER 15 - 25, 2024**

**LISBON \* FATIMA \* SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA  
SALAMANCA \* AVILA \* MADRID \* LOURDES**



HOSTED BY

**FR. ED CIMBALA**

**\$3499 PER PERSON FROM NEWARK\***  
\*Air/land tour price is \$2959 plus \$540 gov't taxes/airline surcharges

**For More Information, Please Contact Fr. Cimbala:**  
Tel: (908) 872-2928  
Email: [fredcimbala@gmail.com](mailto:fredcimbala@gmail.com)

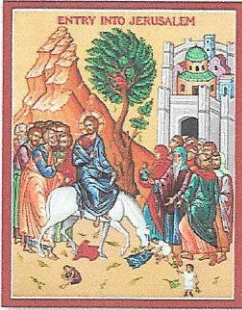
**SPACE IS LIMITED! SIGN UP TODAY!!!**

## **PROPER POSTURE FOR PRAYER DURING THE EASTER SEASON**

From Resurrection Matins until the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost, the proper posture for **all** prayer is to stand rather than kneel. Standing is a sign of joy. And what greater joy do we have other than the Resurrection of Christ? After the celebration of Pentecost, the proper posture for prayer during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy is to stand during the times St. Mary's has been accustomed to kneeling. This is because each Divine Liturgy is a celebration of the Resurrection. **Also, if we follow the standing norms of the Byzantine Catholic Church in America, it is less confusing to our many visitors. If it is not physically possible for you to stand, please feel free to kneel or sit.** If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to ask Fr. Ed.

# The Journey Through Great and Holy Week

## FLOWERY/PALM SUNDAY (John 12:12-18).



This Sunday commemorates the triumphant entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem received Christ as a king and, therefore, took branches of palms and went out to meet Him, laying down the palms in His path. The people cried out the prophecy of Zechariah: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel" (v. 13; of Zechariah 9:9).

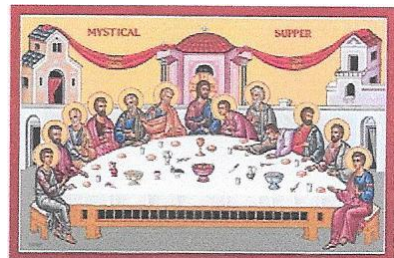
The celebration of the Jewish Passover brought crowds of Jews and converted Jews to Jerusalem. They had heard of Christ's works and words, especially about Lazarus's resurrection. All the events related to Christ had a Messianic meaning for the Jews at the time. This vexed the high priests and Pharisees. As usual, Christ went to the Temple to pray and teach. That evening, Christ departed for Bethany. The tradition of the Church of distributing palms this Sunday comes from the act of the people placing the branches of palms in front of Christ, which henceforth symbolizes for the Christian the victory of Christ over evil forces and death.

## HOLY THURSDAY

On Thursday of Holy Week, four events are commemorated: the washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and the betrayal of Christ by Judas.

### The Institution of the Eucharist

At the Mystical Supper in the Upper Room, Jesus gave a radically new meaning to the food and drink of the sacred meal. He identified Himself with the bread and wine: "Take, eat; this is my Body. Drink of it all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant" (Matthew 26:26-28).



We have learned to equate food with life because it sustains our earthly existence. In the Eucharist, the distinctively unique human food - bread and wine - becomes our gift of life. Consecrated and sanctified, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. This change is not physical but mystical and sacramental. While the qualities of the bread and wine remain, we partake of the true Body and Blood of Christ. In the Eucharistic meal, God enters into such a communion of life that He feeds humanity with His being while remaining distinct. In the words of St. Maximos the Confessor, Christ "transmits to us divine life, making Himself eatable." Christ acts so that "we might become sharers of divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). The Author of life shatters the limitations of our createdness.

The Eucharist is at the center of the Church's life. It is her most profound prayer and principal activity. It is, at one and the same time, both the source and the summit of her life. In the Eucharist, the Church manifests her true nature and is continuously changed from a human community into the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the People of God. The Eucharist is the pre-eminent sacrament. It completes all the others and recapitulates the entire economy of salvation. Our new life in Christ is constantly renewed and increased by the Eucharist. The Eucharist imparts life, and the life it gives is the life of God.

In the Eucharist, the Church remembers and enacts the redemptive event of the Cross sacramentally and participates in its saving grace. This does not suggest that the Eucharist attempts to reclaim a past event. The Eucharist does not repeat what cannot be repeated. Christ is not slain anew and repeatedly. Rather, the Eucharistic food is changed concretely and really into the Body and Blood of the Lamb of God, "Who gave Himself up for the life of the world." Christ, the Theanthropos, continually offers Himself to the faithful through the consecrated Gifts, i.e., His very own risen and deified Body, which for our sake died once and now lives (Hebrews 10:2; Revelation 1:18). Hence, the faithful come to Church week by week not only to worship God and to hear His word. They come, first of all, to experience over and over the mystery of salvation and to be united intimately to the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Eucharist, we receive and partake of the resurrected Christ. We share in His sacrificed, risen, and deified Body "for the forgiveness of sins and life eternal" (Divine Liturgy). In the Eucharist, Christ pours into us - as a permanent and constant gift - the Holy Spirit, "Who bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God - and if children - then heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16-17).

## **GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY**

The Eastern Church commemorates Christ's death on the Cross on Great and Holy Friday. This is the culmination of the observance of His Passion, in which our Lord suffered and died for our sins. On Friday afternoon, Vespers observes the unnauling of Christ from the Cross and the placement of His body in the tomb.

### **Commemoration of Great and Holy Friday**

On this day, we commemorate Christ's sufferings: the mockery, the crown of thorns, the scourging, the nails, the thirst, the vinegar and gall, the cry of desolation, and all the Savior endured on the Cross.

The day of Christ's death is the day of sin. The sin which polluted God's creation from the breaking dawn of time reached its frightful climax on the hill of Golgotha. There, sin, evil, destruction, and death came into their own. Ungodly men had Him nailed to the Cross to destroy Him. However, His death condemned the fallen world irrevocably by revealing its true and abnormal nature.

In Christ, who is the New Adam, there is no sin. And therefore, there is no death. He accepted death because He assumed the whole tragedy of our life. He chose to pour His life into death in order to destroy it; and to break the hold of evil. His death is the final and ultimate revelation of His perfect obedience and love. He suffered for us the excruciating pain of absolute solitude and alienation - "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!" (Mark 15:34). Then, He accepted the ultimate horror of death with the agonizing cry, "It is finished" (John 19:30). His cry was at one and the same time an indication that He was in control of His death and that His work of redemption was accomplished, finished,

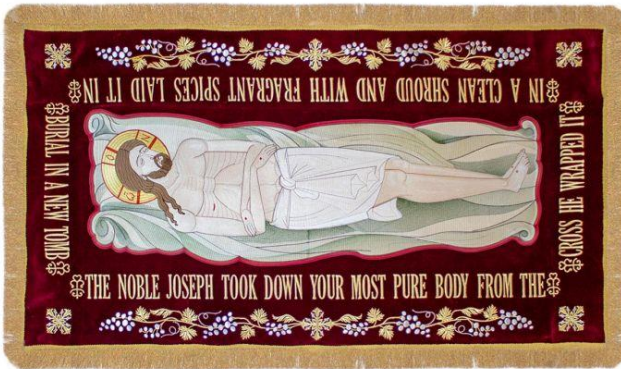


fulfilled. How strange! While our death is radical unfulfillment, His is total fulfillment.

"Within the mystery of Christ dead and resurrected, death acquires positive value. Even if physical, biological death still appears to reign, it is no longer the final stage in a long destructive process. It has become the indispensable doorway and the sure sign of our ultimate Pascha, our passage from death to life rather than from life to death. The day of Christ's death has become our true birthday.

From the beginning, the Church observed an annual commemoration of the decisive and crucial three days of sacred history, i.e., Great Friday, Great Saturday, and Pascha. Great

Friday and Saturday have been observed as days of deep sorrow and strict fast from Christian antiquity.



Great Friday and Saturday direct our

attention to Christ's trial, crucifixion, death, and burial. We are placed within the awesome mystery of the extreme humility of our suffering God. Therefore, these days are at once days of deep gloom and watchful expectation. The Author of Life is at work transforming death into life: "Come, let us see our Life lying in the tomb, that he may give life to those that in their tombs lie dead" (Sitchera of Great Saturday Orthros).

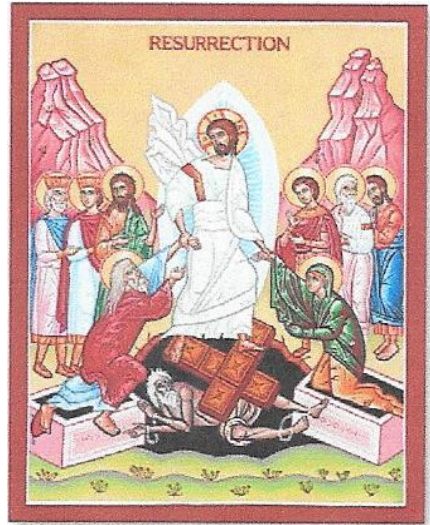
Liturgically, the profound and awesome event of the death and burial of God in the flesh is marked by a particular kind of silence, i.e., by the absence of a Eucharistic celebration. Great Friday and Great Saturday are the only two days of the year when no Eucharistic assembly is held. However, before the twelfth century,

it was the custom to celebrate the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts on Great Friday.

The divine services of Great Friday, with the richness of their ample Scripture lessons, superb hymnography, and vivid liturgical actions, bring the passion of Christ and its cosmic significance into sharp focus. The hymns of the services on this day help us to see how the Church understands and celebrates the wondrous mystery of Christ's passion and death.

## THE GREAT DAY EASTER

On the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha, Eastern Christians celebrate the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This feast of feasts is the most important day in the life of the Church. It is a celebration of the defeat of death, as neither death itself nor the power of the grave could hold our Savior captive. In this victory that came through the Cross, Christ broke the bondage of sin and through faith, offers us restoration, transformation, and eternal life.



### Commemoration of The Great and Holy Feast of Pascha

Holy Week ends at sunset of Great and Holy Saturday, as the Church prepares to celebrate her most ancient and preeminent festival, Pascha, the feast of feasts. The time of preparation will give way to a time of fulfillment. The glorious and resplendent light emanating from the empty Tomb will dispel the darkness. Christ, risen from the dead, cracks the fortress of death and takes "captivity captive" (Psalm 67:19). All the limitations of our createdness are torn asunder. Death is swallowed up in victory, and life is liberated. "For as by a man came death, by a man, came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in



Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:21-22). Pascha is the dawn of the new and unending day. The Resurrection constitutes the most radical and decisive deliverance of humankind.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Christian faith's fundamental truth and absolute fact. It is the central experience and essential kerygma of the Church. It confirms the authenticity of Christ's remarkable earthly life and vindicates the truth of His teaching. It seals all His redemptive work: His life, the model of a holy life; His compelling and unique teaching; His extraordinary works; and His awesome, life-creating death. Christ's Resurrection is the guarantee of our salvation. Together with His Ascension, it brings to perfection God's union with us for all eternity.

The Resurrection made possible the miracle of the Church, which in every age and generation proclaims and affirms "God's plan for the universe, the ultimate divinization of man and the created order." The profound experience of and the unshakable belief in the risen Lord enabled the Apostles to evangelize the world and empowered the Church to overcome paganism. The Resurrection discloses the indestructible power and inscrutable wisdom of God. It disposes of the illusory myths and belief systems by which people, bereft of divine knowledge, strain to affirm the meaning and purpose of their existence. The Resurrection bestows illumination, energizes souls, brings forgiveness, transfigures life, creates saints, and gives joy. Christ, risen and glorified, releases humanity from the delusions of idolatry. In Him, grave-bound humanity discovers and is filled with incomparable hope.

The Resurrection has not yet abolished the reality of death. But it has revealed its powerlessness (Hebrews 2:14-15). We continue to die as a result of the Fall. Our bodies decay and fall away. "God allows death to exist but turns it against corruption and its cause, sin, and sets a boundary both to corruption and sin." Thus, physical death does not destroy our life of communion with God. Instead, we move from death to life - from this fallen world to God's reign.

*Special Thanks to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for this description of Holy Week and Pascha.*

# Sharing of the Easter Basket



After blessing the Easter Foods following the Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday, everyone is invited to stay and share foods from their basket. This gives those unfamiliar with the tradition of blessing Easter Foods an opportunity to experience, taste, and see how

excellent everything is. Everyone is encouraged to make up a basket consisting of the foods they gave up during the Great Fast – your basket does not have to have Eastern European foods. Did you give up your favorite wine, cheese, meat, dessert, or candy? That is what you put in the basket! If you are making a basket for the first time, please see Fr. Ed. He has a few Easter Basket covers, and he will give you one.

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**SPACE IS LIMITED! SIGN UP TODAY!!!**

**Pick up a brochure from the rack on the bulletin board outside the Social Hall or talk with Fr. Ed for more information.**

**Please take this bulletin home with you ... take one to share with your friends**



# Joyful Noise

Notes from  
the Cantor's Stand

## *Glory be to Jesus Christ!*

Hello, dear parishioners.

Holy Week is now upon us, and I have been reflecting on our musical journey over this past year. Our congregation is growing more comfortable with the musical traditions of our church, and hearing everyone participating from the pews is very encouraging for me. Also, a few of you have approached me about participating in the chanting of the epistle, and this, too, fills me with gladness. As our music tradition grows, so does our community prayer life. Keep up the excellent work, and I look forward to our future parish choir coming to fruition.

In April, right after Pascha, I will be heading back to Canada to participate in a recording project of a new work written by Benedict Sheehan, commissioned by my old choir, Axios. It is a War Requiem for Ukraine based on the traditional Parastas service of our Eastern Rites. The music is quite moving, and I am excited to be one of the principal ensemble members. From April 8<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, our beloved baritone, Seth Gilman, will be stepping into the cantor role, and I know he will appreciate all the support St Mary's will offer him. Thank you, Seth, for stepping in!

Until then, Looking forward to our great Paschal season!

*Boris*

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE



Sunday, March 24

Palm/Flowery Sunday

10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy  
with Blessing of Palms and Pussywillows  
Followed by the Service of Holy Anointing

Monday, March 25

Feast of the Annunciation

6:00 PM – Divine Liturgy

Thursday, March 28 \* Great and Holy Thursday

6:00 PM

Vespers and Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Friday, March 29 \* Great and Good Friday

3:00 PM – Vespers with Burial Procession  
(With Choir)

Easter Sunday, March 31

The Resurrection of Our Lord

10:00 AM – Resurrection Matins  
and Divine Liturgy (With Choir)  
Followed by the Blessing of Baskets