

Bulletin for April 28-May 4, 2024

– Palm Sunday & Holy Week Edition –



Photo from the "Basilica minore di Santa Sofia"

SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK & PASCHA 2024

MON	4/29/2024 5:45 PM 6:30 PM	HOLY MONDAY Confessions Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
TUES	4/30/2024 5:45 PM 6:30 PM	HOLY TUESDAY Confessions Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
WED	5/1/2024 5:45 PM 6:30 PM	HOLY WEDNESDAY Confessions (<i>Last Chance Before Pascha!</i>) Sacrament of Holy Unction (Anointing)
THURS	5/2/2024 4:15 PM ~5:30 PM 6:30 PM	HOLY THURSDAY – THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST Vesperal Divine Liturgy in Commemoration of the Last Supper Soup and Bread Meal Matins with the Reading of the Passion Gospels <i>Preparation of the Tomb after Services</i>
FRI	5/3/2024 9:00 AM 6:30 PM	HOLY FRIDAY – CRUCIFIXION, DEATH AND BURIAL OF CHRIST Morning Prayer Service – “Royal Hour” (<i>in the Chapel</i>) Vespers of Holy Friday Procession with the Holy Shroud (<i>Outdoors, Weather Permitting</i>)
SAT	5/4/2024 9:00 AM 8:00 PM	HOLY SATURDAY – AWAITING THE RESURRECTION Vesperal Divine Liturgy <i>Decorating of Church after Liturgy</i> <i>Church Open All Day for Visits to the Holy Tomb</i> Resurrection Procession (<i>Outdoors, Weather Permitting</i>) Resurrection Matins Service Blessing of Easter Food Baskets
SUN	5/5/2024 10:00 AM	PASCHA – THE GREAT DAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST Divine Liturgy Blessing of Easter Food Baskets <i>Children’s Easter Egg Hunt (Weather Permitting)</i>

Easter Egg Hunt for children under 12 years of age will take place after Divine Liturgy on Pascha Sunday, May 5th (weather permitting). **All children are welcome and encouraged to participate!**



HOLY WEEK & PASCHA ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fr. David read the following in a church bulletin: **“THIS IS THE HOLIEST WEEK OF THE YEAR. RE-ADJUST YOUR SCHEDULE. CHANGE YOUR PRIORITIES. ATTEND SERVICES THIS WEEK.”** *This is very true!*

Holy Week is the high point of the Christian year. We liturgically celebrate in a *chronological* manner the saving events of Our Lord’s Suffering, Death and Resurrection. Our church becomes the Upper Room of the Last Supper, Calvary and the Tomb. We walk step-by-step with Christ. All those things done by Our Savior are *re-presented*—made present again. We receive this experience primarily from the services occurring in church.

- **Services**

There is at least one service per day during Holy Week. Come to as many as possible! If you have to prioritize church attendance due to your situation in life, gravitate towards the services of the last three days of Holy Week—Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

- **Service Times**

Please pay close attention to the times of services listed in the bulletin. **NONE of our evening services this week begin at our “usual” 6:00 PM time slot.**

Holy Monday through Holy Friday, our evening services will begin at 6:30 PM. We hope this extra half-hour will be of assistance to those who work and have commutes, students who have homework, etc.

Our **Holy Thursday** schedule begins with the Divine Liturgy commemorating the Last Supper at 4:15 PM. A simple Lenten meal of soup and bread will follow, starting around 5:30 PM. *All are welcome!* After the meal, at 6:30 PM, we will have the Matins Service with the Passion Gospels. If you can, come to both services—if not, come to one!

Resurrection Matins will begin on Holy Saturday at 8:00 PM. Since the early days of the Christian Church, the Paschal Night has been an important time. Resurrection Matins itself speaks of “this holy, radiant, and saving night.”

- **Holy Week Fasting**

Holy Week, as the most solemn week on the Church's calendar, is observed as a week of fasting. If you are able, keep a "strict" fast from meat and dairy all week. At a *minimum*, fast from meat and meat products on Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, Holy Wednesday and Holy Thursday. **All are enjoined to *strict fast* from meat and dairy products on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.**

- **Confession During Holy Week**

Confession is available on Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, and Holy Wednesday from 5:45 PM until 6:20 PM. These are the last opportunities for Confession before Pascha. Confessions will not be heard on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, or on Pascha morning itself. *If the sacristy door is open and the light is on, please walk right in!*

- **Vigil at the Tomb on Holy Saturday**

Our church will be open all day on Holy Saturday for prayer and for visits to the Holy Tomb. This is an old tradition, and it is wonderful that we are able to keep it going. Take a moment out of your busy schedule and come quietly to pray in preparation for Pascha.

- **Decorating**

Decorating for Good Friday will be after services on Holy Thursday evening; and we will decorate the church for Pascha after services on Holy Saturday morning.

- **Perpetual Commemorations**

In order to focus on Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection, all Perpetual Commemorations for Bright Week will be made after St. Thomas Sunday.

THOUGHTS ON STEWARDSHIP

By Dan Hromyak

"Pilate again said to them, 'Then what shall I do with the man whom you call the King of the Jews?' And they cried out again, 'Crucify him.'" - Mark 15:12-13

Jesus told us "whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me." Every day we are presented opportunities to help someone. Every day we have the opportunity to see the face of Jesus in others and be the face of Jesus to others. Every day we pass by someone in need. Pray for the strength and courage to be the answer to someone's prayer.

SPRING 2024 PIROHI WRAP-UP

By Lorraine Amos

March 2024	252 Dozen	\$2008.06
April 2024	244 1/2 Dozen	\$1918.00
TOTAL	496 1/2 Dozen	\$3926.06 PROFIT

We want to express our sincerest gratitude to all St. John's Members who gave their time and talents to participate in our Spring Pirohi Sales. We had awesome turnouts for both sales and were FINISHED by 10:30 am!! We also want to give a HUGE SHOUT-OUT to Tommy Ristvey of **Vey's Pub and Grill** who generously donated the cheese and the 300# of potato used in the two sales. We also want to thank Jerry Chupak who supplies the morning donuts, and to Melinda Kroko who organizes the luncheon and all the ladies who provide the foods.



Our next pirohi sale will be in OCTOBER. There is NO SALE in July. Please join us in preserving this ETHNIC Church Fundraiser. We begin at 8am and are usually finished by 11am. COME, LAUGH and have FUN with us!! (PS. We HAVE pirohi for the July 5K Run.)

And we all thank Lorraine for all her dedicated efforts at organizing this wonderful and popular fundraiser for our parish!

Step by Step through the Holy Week and Paschal Services

by Fr. David

Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, and Holy Wednesday cover a number of motifs. The Gospel readings are often taken from the final teachings of Jesus Christ. Holy Monday includes the theme of Joseph from the Old Testament, as well as the fig tree that was cursed and withered by Jesus. Holy Tuesday centers on the parable of the Ten Virgins. Holy Wednesday points to the anointing of Christ by the sinful woman in the house of Simon the leper.

On Holy Wednesday, it has become customary in many places to offer the **Sacrament of Holy Unction** (Holy Anointing) for the entire parish community. As this sacrament is offered for the healing of soul and body and the forgiveness of sins, it is received by Orthodox Christians who have confessed during Lent as a spiritual preparation to enter into the final days of Holy Week and Pascha.

The **Vespers on Holy Thursday** commemorates the Last Supper, the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, the Institution of the Priesthood, and Christ's humble act of washing the feet of His disciples. Today's Gospel reading is actually the longest of any Divine Liturgy.

The **Matins of Holy Friday** (typically anticipated on Holy Thursday evening) includes twelve readings from the Gospels. These readings relate Jesus' final discourse to the disciples; Jesus' agony in the garden; His betrayal and arrest; His trial, mocking and scourging; His journey to Golgotha; His crucifixion; and His burial. This service helps us to begin our observance of Holy Friday having heard all that the Scriptures tell us about Our Lord's Passion and Death.

The full **Royal Hours** service is actually an aggregate of five shorter services: 1st Hour, 3rd Hour, 6th Hour, 9th Hour, and Typika. Each of the hours includes Psalms, hymns, an Old Testament reading, an Epistle reading, and a Gospel reading related to the Passion and Death of Christ.

The **Vespers on Holy Friday** again shares the narrative of the Passion and Death of Christ. At the conclusion of this service, the Shroud (*epitaphios*; *plashchanitsa*) depicting either the dead Christ or the entire scene of Christ's burial is solemnly carried in procession and "buried" in the Tomb in the middle of the church where it remains until Resurrection Matins.

The **Vespers on Holy Saturday** directs our attention to the Resurrection. In the early church, it was at this time that new members of the church were baptized, thus being

joined to the Death and Resurrection of Jesus in a personal way. This Liturgy includes two readings from the Old Testament, one with the Hymn of Moses from the book of Exodus, and the other with the Hymn of the Three Youths from the book of Daniel. Instead of the singing of “Alleluia” before the Gospel, a Psalm verse “Arise, O God, and judge the earth, for all nations belong to You” is sung. During this time, the black vestments and altar covers are removed, and all vestments and covers in the church are changed to white. The Gospel reading from Matthew proclaims the Resurrection for the first time, as well as Jesus’ instruction to baptize all nations. The festal blessing of bread, wheat, wine, and oil takes place at the end of the Liturgy, a hold-over from the days when this Liturgy was celebrated in the evening and people needed a “blessed snack” to tide them over until after the Pascha Liturgy.

Resurrection Matins begins with the removal of the Shroud. The Shroud is placed on the altar until the Ascension. After the candles of the congregation are lit (often by the priest sharing the Paschal Light), all go outside the church in procession for the beginning of the service. Before the closed doors of the church, the Paschal Tropar “Christ is risen from the dead...” is sung for the first time. The doors of the church are blessed with the sign of the cross before all proceed back inside. The main body of the service consists of a Canon written by St. John of Damascus, the refrain being “Christ is risen from the dead!” During the special Paschal Stichera, all come forward to venerate the Cross, Gospel, and Icon of the Resurrection. A homily by St. John Chrysostom is read at the conclusion of the service.

Paschal Foods are blessed at some point, according to parish custom. These meat- and dairy-rich foods are a sampling of the type of foods from which we abstained during Lent. They are the first foods that are eaten after Liturgy on Pascha, symbolizing the richness of the heavenly banquet in God’s Kingdom (a recurring theme in the Bible). Every Divine Liturgy is a foretaste of the eternal feast in God’s Kingdom. Thus, after the Eucharistic Banquet on Pascha, we are called to extend the joy and feasting into our homes with this special blessing.

The **Divine Liturgy of Pascha** is the culmination of the Paschal services. The tropar “Christ is risen...” is sung many times, even in place of other regular hymns. It is customary to read the Gospel from John (1:1-17) in twelve sections in several languages, symbolic of the apostles going to preach to the whole world. At the end of the Liturgy, the “artos” (a leavened bread) is blessed; in parish practice, it is distributed on Thomas Sunday.

The full celebration of Pascha extends for an entire week, known as “**Bright Week.**” The doors of the ikonostas remain open, a sign that the kingdom of God has been opened to us through Christ’s resurrection. We do not kneel for prayer during Bright Week or the rest of the Paschal season, as kneeling is a sign of penance. On Bright Monday, after Liturgy, a procession around the church includes four Gospel readings—one from each evangelist—and share the story of the Resurrection.

Don't Forget Your Basket!

If you think Easter baskets are just about chocolate and marshmallows, *think again!*

Included in this bulletin is an informational handout about the blessing of Paschal foods, a custom practiced by many people in and from Central and Eastern Europe (Carpatho-Rusyns, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Poles, Russians, Romanians, Hungarians, etc.). This information includes the traditional Carpatho-Rusyn foods that many in our parish know and love.

If you bring a basket faithfully every year—*great!* Keep it up! But if you stopped bringing one (either because you can't eat those foods anymore, or making those foods is too labor intensive), or if you have *never* brought one (because you aren't familiar with this custom), please consider bringing one this year! EVERYONE is invited to bring a basket of foods that are representative of those things which were given up during the Lenten fast. You are not required to only bring the "traditional" foods—bring the food you will eat as your Easter feast. If you need a little guidance, bring something from each of these categories:

Bread: usually sweet and rich.

Hardboiled eggs in the shell, usually dyed

(These are symbols of Christ "breaking" out of the tomb.)

Dairy: cheese, butter.

Meat: pork (ham, sausage) or lamb or chicken
or turkey or beef or...

Seasonings: Salt and horseradish are popular.

Other Foods: chocolate, sweets, wine, whatever!



There's no "right" or "wrong" way to prepare your Easter basket. Make this tradition your own!

This year, the Blessing of Easter Food Baskets will take place in the Fellowship Hall after the 8:00 PM Resurrection Matins service on Saturday, May 4th and also after Divine Liturgy on Pascha morning, May 5th.

**HOLY WEEK
SCRIPTURE
READINGS**

Holy Monday

Matins

Matthew 21:18-43

Vespers (Presanctified)

Exodus 1:1-20

Job 1:1-12

Matthew 24:3-35

Holy Tuesday

Matins

Matthew 22:15-23:39

Vespers (Presanctified)

Exodus 2:5-10

Job 1:13-22

Matthew 24:36-26:2

Holy Wednesday

Matins

John 12:17-50

Vespers (Presanctified)

Exodus 2:11-22

Job 2:1-10

Matt. 26:6-16

Holy Thursday

Matins

Luke 22:1-39

Vesperal Liturgy

Exodus 19:10-19

Job 38:1-21, 42:1-5

Isaiah 50:4-11

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 26:2-20

John 13:3-17

Matthew 26:21-39

Luke 22:43-44

Matthew 26:40-27:2

Holy Friday

Matins-12 Passion Gospels

1. John 13:31-18:1

2. John 18:1-28

3. Matthew 26:57-75

4. John 18:28-19:16

5. Matthew 27:3-32

6. Mark 15:16-32

7. Matthew 27:33-54

8. Luke 23:32-49

9. John 19:25-37

10. Mark 15:43-47

11. John 19:38-42

12. Matthew 27:62-66

First Royal Hour

Zachariah 11:10-13

Galatians 6:14-18

Matthew 27:1-56

Third Royal Hour

Isaiah 50:4-11

Romans 5:6-10

Mark 15:16-41

Sixth Royal Hour

Isaiah 52:13-54:1

Hebrews 2:11-18

Luke 23:32-49

Ninth Royal Hour

Jeremiah 11:18-12:15

Hebrews 10:19-31

John 19:23-37

Vespers

Exodus 33:11-23

Job 42:12-17

Isaiah 52:13-54:1

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 27:1-38

Luke 23:39-43

Matthew 27:39-54

John 19:31-37

Matthew 27:55-61

Holy Saturday

Matins

Ezekiel 37:1-14

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 &

Galatians 3:13-14

Matthew 27:62-66

Vesperal-Liturgy

Genesis 1:1-13

Exodus 13:20-15:19

Daniel 3:1-23; Song of the

Three Young Men: 1-66

Romans 6:3-11

Matthew 28:1-20

PASCHA

Matins

Mark 16:1-8

Divine Liturgy

Acts 1:1-8

John 1:1-17

Vespers

John 20:19-25

— Reading the Bible During Holy Week —

What makes the services of Holy Week special? While there are many liturgical practices and customs that have developed over the centuries, the most important distinctive to the Holy Week services is that we read EVERYTHING in the Gospels about Our Lord's Passion and Death throughout the course of the services. A special **Guide to the Holy Week Scripture Readings** is included on the previous page. Those present in church will hear these readings proclaimed. Those unable to attend a particular service are heartily encouraged to read the **Bible Readings for the day (especially the Gospel)** at home. This way, you will stay in sync with what is happening in church.



YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR

*Bright Wednesday
Vespers & Potluck*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024
PASCHAL VESPERS AT 6:00 PM
FESTIVE (FAST-FREE) POTLUCK TO FOLLOW

SAINT JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

3180 Morefield Road
Hermitage, PA 16148

Office: 724-981-0571
Rectory: 724-346-4457
E-mail: father.david@stjohnacroc.org
Website: www.stjohnacroc.org

Clergy:
Rev. Father David Mastroberte
Rev. Deacon John Anderson

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese – Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Sacramental and Membership Information

Sick Calls can be made at any time. Please phone the rectory (724-346-4457) when a family member is admitted to the hospital, or to request a home visit. Hospitals do *not* call to alert the parish when someone is admitted.

Marriages are solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. Circumstances may require a dispensation from the diocesan bishop. Consult the pastor at least six months in advance and before any plans have been made for the wedding reception. Marriages cannot be celebrated during the fasting seasons of the church, or on Fridays.

Baptisms are usually scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays. Consult the pastor. Two godparents (godfather and godmother) are required, at least one of whom must be a practicing Orthodox Christian in good standing at an Orthodox parish, and the other (at least) a practicing, baptized Christian.

Church Funerals are, under ordinary circumstances, provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual and material obligations to the parish; otherwise, the funeral service is conducted at the funeral home. **The Church does *not* permit cremation.**

Parishioners in “good standing” are those Orthodox Christians who, as members of Saint John’s Orthodox Church, strive to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church; participate in the life of the parish through regular church attendance, regular reception of Holy Communion and periodic Holy Confession (and receive these sacraments no less than once a year); if married, having been married in the Orthodox Church; and financially support the parish (especially through an annual “pledge”).

Prospective members and returning members are asked to fill out an application form, copies of which are available in the church office.

Our Church’s Website: stjohnacroc.org
Our YouTube Live Stream: youtube.com/user/saintjohnsharon
Our Facebook Page: facebook.com/SaintJohnHermitagePA
Our Diocesan Website: acrod.org

For Online Giving Options, please visit our website: stjohnacroc.org

Happy Birthday!

Tom Tulip April 28
Brent Hynes April 29
Nona Kolbrich April 29
Dina Fabian May 1

*"God Grant You Many,
Blessed Years!"*



■ Our Sponsors ■

Bulletin Sponsor: Week of April 28, 2024
*In Loving Memory of Mother/Grandmother Helen Andras
by Dorothy Pacinda, Bob and Michael Andras*

Candelabrum on Sunday, April 28, 2024
For All Our Parishioners

Eternal Lamp: Week of April 28, 2024
*In Memory of Jack Likens 40th Day
By Jennifer Jisko*

Schedule of Men to Hold Candles During the Gospel

April 28, 2024
Robert Miller
John Moon
Dan Ristvey
Joel Ristvey
Matt Ristvey

May 5, 2024
Tom Ristvey
Pete Roman
Steve Saluga
Milan Shumkaroff
Gino Tofani

May 12, 2024
Donald Yasnowsky
Kevin Yasnowsky
Gary Yonchak
Bob Amos
Jason Baker