



SAINT OLYMPIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

34 N MAIN STREET
NORWOOD, NEW YORK

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY



*Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church,
a young and, God willing, growing community of worshipers.*

Fr. Gregory Fedorchak, Parish Rector 607-427-3286, father.fedorchak@gmail.com

Upcoming Services:

April 9, Wednesday

6pm – Presanctified Liturgy
& Archbishop Michael Visit

April 12, Lazarus Saturday

9am – Divine Liturgy
5pm – Great Vespers

April 13, Palm Sunday

10am (9:40am Hours) – Divine Liturgy
6pm – Bridegroom Matins

April 14, Holy Monday

6pm – Bridegroom Matins

April 15, Holy Tuesday

6pm – Bridegroom Matins

April 16, Holy Wednesday

6pm – Holy Unction

April 17, Holy Thursday

9am – Vesperal Liturgy (Mystical Supper)

6pm – Matins of Holy Friday

(12 Passion Gospel Readings)

April 18, Holy Friday

8am – Royal Hours

3pm – Vespers of Holy Friday

7pm – Matins of Holy Saturday w/ Lamentations

April 19, Holy Saturday

9am – Baptisms & Chrismations
and Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil

11:30pm – Midnight Office, Paschal Matins,
and Divine Liturgy

April 20, GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

2pm – Agape Vespers & Fellowship

April 21, Bright Monday

10am – Divine Liturgy

The Raising of Lazarus

(Lazarus Saturday)

April 12



Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem

(Palm Sunday)

April 13

*By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy
passion, Thou didst confirm the universal
resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children
with the branches 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 Lazarus Saturday

*Sitting on Thy throne in heaven, and carried on
a foal on earth, O Christ God, accept the praise
of angels and the songs of children who sing:
Blessed is he who comes to recall Adam!*

Kontakion of Palm Sunday

Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday
From *The Orthodox Faith* - Volume II: Worship
By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

The week following the Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt is called Palm or Branch Week. At the Tuesday services of this week the Church recalls that Jesus' friend Lazarus has died and that the Lord is going to raise him from the dead (Jn 11). As the days continue toward Saturday, the Church, in its hymns and verses, continues to follow Christ towards Bethany to the tomb of Lazarus. On Friday evening, the eve of the celebration of the Resurrection of Lazarus, the "great and saving forty days" of Great Lent are formally brought to an end:

Having accomplished the forty days for the benefit of our souls, we pray to Thee, O Lover of Man, that we may see the holy week of Thy passion, that in it we may glorify Thy greatness and Thine unspeakable plan of salvation for our sake . . . (Vespers Hymn).

Lazarus Saturday is a paschal celebration. It is the only time in the entire Church Year that the resurrectional service of Sunday is celebrated on another day. At the liturgy of Lazarus Saturday, the Church glorifies Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" who, by raising Lazarus, has confirmed the universal resurrection of mankind even before His own suffering and death.

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the branches 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)

Christ—the Joy, the Truth and the Light of All, the Life of the world and its Resurrection—has appeared in his goodness to those on earth. He has become the Image of our Resurrection, granting divine forgiveness to all (Kontakion)

At the Divine Liturgy of Lazarus Saturday the baptismal verse from Galatians: As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal 3.27) replaces the Thrice-holy Hymn thus indicating the resurrectional character of the celebration, and the fact that Lazarus Saturday was once among the few great baptismal days in the Orthodox Church Year.

Because of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, Christ was hailed by the masses as the long-expected Messiah-King of Israel. Thus, in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, He entered Jerusalem, the City of the King, riding on the colt of an ass (Zechariah 9.9; Jn 12.12). The crowds greeted Him with branches in their hands and called out to Him with shouts of praise: Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The Son of David! The King of Israel! Because of this glorification by the people, the priests and scribes were finally driven "to destroy Him, to put Him to death" (Luke 19.47; John 11.53, 12.10).

The feast of Christ's triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, **Palm Sunday**, is one of the twelve major feasts of the Church. The services of this Sunday follow directly from those of Lazarus Saturday. The church building continues to be vested in resurrectional splendor, filled with hymns which continually repeat the Hosanna offered to Christ as the Messiah-King who comes in the name of God the Father for the salvation of the world.

The main troparion of Palm Sunday is the same one sung on Lazarus Saturday. It is sung at all of the services, and is used at the Divine Liturgy as the third antiphon which follows the other special psalm verses which are sung as the liturgical antiphons in the place of those normally used. The second troparion of the feast, as well as the kontakion and the other verses and hymns, all continue to glorify Christ's triumphal manifestation "six days before the Passover" when he will give himself at the Supper and on the Cross for the life of the world.

Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together. Let us all take up Thy cross and say: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! (First Verse of Vespers)

When we were buried with Thee in baptism, O Christ God, we were made worthy of eternal life by Thy resurrection. Now we praise Thee and sing: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! (Second Troparion)

Sitting on Thy throne in heaven, and carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God, accept the praise of angels and the songs of children who sing: Blessed is he who comes to recall Adam! (Kontakion)

At the vigil of the feast of Palm Sunday the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah-King are read together with the Gospel accounts of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. At Matins branches are blessed which the people carry throughout the celebration as the sign of their own glorification of Jesus as Saviour and King. These branches are usually palms, or, in the Slavic churches, pussy willows which came to be customary because of their availability and their early blossoming in the springtime.

As the people carry their branches and sing their songs to the Lord on Palm Sunday, they are judged together with the Jerusalem crowd. For it was the very same voices which cried Hosanna to Christ, which, a few days later, cried Crucify Him! Thus in the liturgy of the Church the lives of men continue to be judged as they hail Christ with the “branches of victory” and enter together with Him into the days of His “voluntary passion.”

The Lord’s Entry Into Jerusalem

By **Metropolitan Anthony Bloom**

Sermons on the Twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, March 30, 1980

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Today Christ enters the path not only of His sufferings but of that dreadful loneliness which enshrouds Him during all the days of Passion week. The loneliness begins with a misunderstanding; the people expect that the Lord’s entry into Jerusalem will be the triumphant procession of a political leader, of a leader who will free his people from oppression, from slavery, from what they consider godlessness – because all paganism or idol-worship is a denial of the living God. The loneliness will develop further into the dreadful loneliness of not being understood even by His disciples. At the Last Supper when the Saviour talks to them for the last time, they will be in constant doubt as to the meaning of His words. And later when He goes into the Garden of Gethsemane before the fearful death that is facing Him, His closest disciples, Peter, John and James – whom He chose to go with Him fall asleep, depressed, tired, hopeless. The culmination of this loneliness will be Christ’s cry on the cross, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” Abandoned men, rejected by the people of Israel He encounters the extreme of forsakenness and dies without God, without men, alone, with only His love for God and His love for mankind, dying for its sake and for God’s glory.

The beginning of Christ’s Passion is today’s triumphal procession; the people expected a king, a leader – and they found the Saviour of their souls. Nothing embitters a person so much as a lost, a disappointed hope; and that explains why people who could receive Him like that, who witnessed the raising of Lazarus, who saw Christ’s miracles and heard His teaching, admired every word, who were ready to become His disciples as long as He brought victory, broke away from Him, turned their backs on Him and a few days later shouted, “Crucify Him, crucify Him.” And Christ spent all those days in loneliness, knowing what was in store for Him, abandoned by every one except the Mother of God, who stood silently by, as she had done throughout her life, participating in His tragic ascent to the Cross; she who had accepted the Annunciation, the Good Tidings, but who also accepted in silence Simeon’s prophecy that a sword would pierce her heart.

During the coming days we shall be present – not just remember, but be present – at Christ’s Passion. We shall be part of the crowd surrounding Christ and the disciples and the Mother of God; as we hear the Gospel readings, as we listen to the prayers of the Church, as one image after another of these days of the Passion passes before our eyes, let each one of us ask himself the question, “Where do I stand, who am I in this crowd? A Pharisee? A Scribe? A traitor, a coward? Who? Or do I stand among the Apostles?” But they too were overcome by fear. Peter denied Him thrice, Judas betrayed Him, John, James and Peter went to sleep just when Christ most needed human love and support; the other disciples fled; no one remained except John and the Mother of God, those who were bound to Him by the kind of love which fears nothing and is ready to share in everything.

Once more let us ask ourselves who we are and where we stand, what our position in this crowd is. Do we stand with hope or despair, or what? And if we stand with indifference, we too are part of that terrifying crowd that surrounded Christ, shuffling, listening, and then going away; as we shall go away from church. The Crucifix will be standing here on Thursday and we shall be reading the Gospel about the Cross, the Crucifixion and death – and then what will happen? The Cross will remain standing, but we shall go away for a rest, go home to have supper, to sleep, to prepare for the fatigues of the next day. And during this time Christ is on the Cross, Christ is in the tomb. How awful it is that, like the disciples in their day, we are not able to spend one night, one hour with Him. Let us think about this, and if we are incapable of doing anything, let us at least realise who we are and where we stand, and at the final hour turn to Christ with the cry, the appeal of the thief, Remember me, Lord, in Thy Kingdom. Amen.

Palm Sunday: Where are You in the Crowd?

By Fr. Lawrence Farley

Reflections in Christ, April 7, 2017

Come away with me; let us leave our world and travel back together to the first Palm Sunday in the first century. Stepping out of our time machine, we see the bright sunshine beating down on us, the dusty road, the jostling, joyful, shouting crowds. And there, coming down the road from Bethany, with the Mount of Olives towering above on His right, Jesus of Nazareth is entering the Holy City with His disciples and a crowd of pilgrims following behind. He is mounted upon a donkey, which plods along with its foal. Christ sits smiling royally upon the donkey as the procession proceeds along the southern way into the Holy City. Multitudes from Jerusalem have come out to greet Him, casting their garments on the road on which He will travel, while others cut branches from the palm trees and spread them also along the path. Everyone is happy, everyone is shouting, and you can pick out from the noise the repeated chant, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord!” The Pharisees caught up in the tumult are scandalized at this open and controversial declaration of His Messiahship, and plead with Him, “Teacher! Rebuke your disciples!” But He responds that prophecy must be fulfilled, and if His disciples were quiet, the very stones would cry out and give voice to their words.

Then freeze the frame, pause the scene in mid-movement, and step back to observe everything as it would appear if painted on an icon. And ask yourself: if you had to play a part in that scene, which part would you play? Where in that crowd would you want to be found? Who would you choose to be?

Would you be among the shouting crowds, one of those enthusiastically hailing Him as the coming Messiah? Not a good choice, for within a week the crowds who once cried, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” would be crying, “Let him be crucified! His blood be upon us and upon our children!” They hailed Him as Messiah only because of what they thought He was about to do for them. He would fulfill their nationalistic and military agenda; He would raise an army and with supernatural power overthrow the Romans, liberating Israel and exalting them to a place of power on the world stage. He would replace the hated *Pax Romana* with a serene and almighty *Pax Hebraica*, and make the Romans pay. When it at once became apparent that He would *not* overthrow Roman rule, and when they saw Him flogged, bleeding, and abused, trotted out by the Romans wearing an anti-Semitic crown of thorns and the purple robe of mockery, they instantly turned on Him. So the Pharisees were right after all! Jesus of Nazareth was not a true prophet, much less the hoped for Messiah, but just another deceiver. Away with Him! Let Him be crucified! No; one should not choose to be part of that happy, triumphant crowd.

Perhaps one should choose to be one of the apostles. On that first Palm Sunday they stood close to their Master, basking in reflected glory. But that also would not be a wise choice. Within the same week following, they all would prove their unworthiness. They would quarrel among themselves over the top places they imagined would be available to them in the coming Kingdom and in the new order, even to the point of quarrelling over seats of honor at their final meal together. Though each one would loudly proclaim his unshakable loyalty to Jesus, when the test came a few hours later, they all forsook Him and fled. Peter even denied Him repeatedly, caving in before the pointed accusing fingers of a servant girl. When the Lord finally found them after His passion and resurrection, they were huddling behind locked doors for fear of the Jews and of their own imminent arrest. No; one should not choose a place among the apostles on that day either.

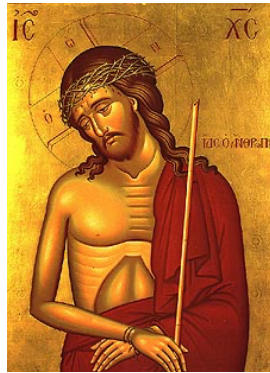
I suggest that the best choice, the place of ultimate safety that day, was the donkey. That beast of burden alone did not ultimately prove itself unworthy. It was not swayed that day by the joyful acclamations, nor later by the screaming words of hate. It was chosen to do a particular job and to bear a particular burden, and it did it, not expecting praise or reward. There it was, front and center, unnoticed and invisible, completely reliable and obedient. That is where I would choose to be, if I had to pick a place and choose a role that day.

The Lord has jobs for us to do, and burdens for us to bear. They might be heavy burdens or light, involving prominence and praise, or obscurity and invisibility. What matters is that we accept whatever load He lays upon us and do not complain. We do not demand applause or reward in this age. It is enough that when the Lord says to us as was said to the donkey, “The Lord has need of it”, we just come along quietly and do what is asked of us. It is true that on Palm Sunday we are called to sing, and to exult, and to wave our palm branches with joy. It is good to sing our Hosannas in obedience to our tradition. It is even better to combine this liturgical exuberance with the calm constancy of ongoing reliable obedience.

HOLY WEEK

From the Orthodox Faith Series, Volume II – Worship

By Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko



In the Orthodox Church the last week of Christ’s life is officially called Passion Week. In popular terminology it is called Holy Week. Each day is designated in the service books as “great and holy.” There are special services every day of the week which are fulfilled in all churches. Earthly life ceases for the faithful as they “go up with the Lord to Jerusalem” (Matins of Great and Holy Monday).

Each day of Holy Week has its own particular theme. The theme of Monday is that of the sterile fig tree which yields no fruit and is condemned. Tuesday the accent is on the vigilance of the wise virgins who, unlike their foolish sisters, were ready when the Lord came to them. Wednesday the focus is on the fallen woman who repents. Great emphasis is made in the liturgical services to compare the woman, a sinful harlot who is saved, to Judas, a chosen apostle who is lost. The one gives her wealth to Christ and kisses his feet; the other betrays Christ for money with a kiss.

On each of these three days the Gospel is read at the Hours, as well as at the Vespers when the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The Old Testament readings are from Exodus, Job, and the Prophets. The Gospel is also read at the Matins services which are traditionally called the “Bridegroom” services because the general theme of each of these days is the end of the world and the judgment of Christ. It is the common practice to serve the Bridegroom services at night.

Behold, the bridegroom comes in the middle of the night and blessed is the servant whom he shall find watching, and unworthy the servant whom he shall find heedless. Take care then, O my soul, and be not weighed down by sleep that you will not be given over unto death and be excluded from the Kingdom. But rise up and call out: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou O God, by the Theotokos have mercy on us.

Troparion of the First Three Days

During the first three days of Holy Week, the Church prescribes that the entire Four Gospels be read at the Hours up to the point in each where the passion of Christ begins. Although this is not usually possible in parish churches, an attempt is sometimes made to read at least one complete Gospel, privately or in common, before Holy Thursday.



Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:4-9 (Epistle for Palm Sunday)



Chess Tournament Champion: Nick Gurrea!

Ask the Priest

Q: Archbishop Michael is coming! How should I greet him?

A: Ask for a blessing as you would a priest, except instead of “Father, bless” say “Master, bless.” Touch the floor with your right hand and place it right hand over left, palm up. Do not cross yourself first. Sometimes, Archbishop Michael will initiate the “kiss of peace” in which case you do right cheek, left cheek, right cheek, and then kiss his hand. If you get confused and things start to go south, he will probably just give you a hug.

Q: How should I address him? What should I call him?

A: When speaking to him, you can say, “Your Eminence,” or “Vladyka” (a less formal, more endearing term from Church Slavonic meaning “Ruler” or “Master”). When speaking about him (3rd person), you would say, “His Eminence.” His formal title is: “The Most Reverend Michael, Archbishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey.” A bishop who has not yet been elevated to archbishop is referred to as “Your Grace” and has the title “Right Reverend.”

St. Olympia Lenten Fellowship

The Fast & The Curious



1 March

Hymns of Repentance: The Orthodox Essence of Lenten Worship (Dr Jessica Suchy-Pilalis)

8 March

Lenten Nourishment (Pres Krista Fedorchak)



15 March

Repentance in Western Saints (Joseph Stark)

22 March

Movie Night: Prince of Egypt



29 March

Themes of Repentance in Byzantine Iconography (Mother Sophronia)

5 April

Chess Tournament



12 April

Sing for Joy with Hymns of Pascha (an informative song-filled session w/ Dr Jessica)

come for Vespers at 5PM
stay for Fellowship (~6-8PM)
34 N Main St, Norwood

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

Fr. Gregory Speaking at “Trust Truth” Event, Hosted by St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Canton

Tuesday, April 8, 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM @ the Best Western in Canton. The talk is entitled, “Freedom Ain’t Free: Healing the Will with Help from the Ascetic Fathers.” It is a 30-minute talk followed by a discussion.

Archbishop Michael Visit – Presanctified Liturgy + Dinner with our Hierarchy!

Wednesday, April 9, 6:00 PM. Contact Jess Gurrea if you would like to sign up to bring food.

Lenten Fellowship:

Saturday, April 12, 6:00 PM. We will conclude our Lenten Fellowship Series with an informative song-filled session w/ Dr. Jessica, learning about the Paschal Hymns! It will be potluck style—bring something Lenten (no meat/dairy) to share *if you’d like*, but food is in no way a requirement for attending. All are welcome!

UPCOMING DIOCESAN EVENTS

Camp Fundraiser

Sunday, May 4, at 4:00 PM: a “Spaghetti and Song” fundraiser for St. Andrew’s Camp will be held at Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Endicott. Tickets can be purchased at <https://givebutter.com/KzEdEw>.

Young Adult Retreat

Friday, May 16 – Sunday, May 18 @ St. Andrew’s Camp. Open to Orthodox young adults, catechumens, and inquirers age 18-35. For questions, contact LonnBologna@gmail.com or text 203-258-5324.

Divine Liturgy with Archbishop, and Camp Open House

Bright Saturday, April 26 at St. Andrew's Camp

Parish Council Conference, NYS Deanery West

Saturday, June 14, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse, NY. The theme of the 2025 Parish Council Conferences is "Integrating New Converts into Our Parish Families."

Altar Server Retreat, NYS Deanery

Saturday, June 28 at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAFETY – Please steer clear of the basement as work intensifies. You may still use the bathroom, but please avoid the kitchen area and debris.

Coffee Hour – Please consider sponsoring a meal after Liturgy. There are still some open slots this coming Sunday. Sign up [here](#) or on the list at Church.

Food Drive – A Lenten almsgiving opportunity: we are collecting shelf-stable food items for our local Norwood Food Pantry. They are specifically in need of pasta, pasta sauce, and condiments. See the box in the side narthex.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Proclaim it aloud. O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King comes to you; He is righteous and saving; He is gentle and mounted upon a donkey, even a young foal.

Zechariah 9:9 OSB (from Vespers, 3rd reading)