



Saint Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

146 Third Avenue, Rankin, PA 15104
Pastor: Very Reverend Nicholas Ferencz, PhD
Cantor: Professor Jerry Jumba
Parish President : Carole Bushak



Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu! Slava vo v'iki!

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MAY 12, 2019

SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN

Sun., May 12 **Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women.** Nine Martyrs of Cyzice.
Mothers' Day

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Panachida: Remembering all the deceased mothers of our parish and our parishioners

Sat., May 18 **Great-martyr Irene of Thessalonika. Icon of the Theotokos "Inexhaustible Chalice"**
8:00 AM **Divine Liturgy in Church Slavonic**

Sun., May 19 **Sunday of the Paralytic.** Long-suffering Job

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Special Remembrance: Albert Hrubic by wife Shirley
Panachida: Albert Hrubic. Angie Grant (1 year anniversary). Fr. Bazyl Zawierucha (1 year anniversary).

Holy Mystery of Confession: Before Divine Liturgy and other services. If you cannot make a scheduled time, please let me know and we can make arrangements.

PEOPLE STUFF

Prayer List: *Deceased:* Margaret Dufalla.

Living: Fr. Joseph Cervo. Pañi Dorothy Hutnyan. Pañi Donna Smoley. Pañi Eleanor Pribish. Dana Andrade. Gloria Andrade. Michael Artim. Gregory Michael Aurilio. Brooklyn Grace Banovsky and her parents Chris and Katie. Jane Barclay. Walter Bolbat. John Bonga. Donald Bodnar. Charlene Borsic. Jaime Budesa. Barbara Chappie. Steve Bournius. Rebecca, David & Bradley Noah Cozad. Mary Ann Crouse. George & Margaret Dorogy. Christina Duranko. Breanne Glass. Dorothy Glass. Eddie Gombos. Jennifer Hartrick. Shirley Hrubic. Kevin Ianni. Gary Ingelido. Alisha Krass. Carson Krass. Savanna Lee Krass. Joan Martell. Brian Masterovsky. Michael Mehalik. Zoe Mehalik. Helen Mihalik. Bill & Patti Novotnak. Frank Palmieri. Diane Phillips. Millie and Edward Phillips. Michael Platt. Anna Senich. Bernice Sindak. Terry Slezak. Bill and Andrea Sovick. Margaret Stemler. Milton and Thelma Supak. Diana Terezis. Bobby and Dee Triffanoff. Josh Walendziewicz. Paul & Valerie Yednak. Jeanne Zajac. *Prosphora Bakers:* Trudy Trifanoff. Delores Cubakovic, and their intentions.

Welcome! We welcome to our church this morning all visitors, guests, relatives, and friends of Saint Michael Church. We invite *everyone* present today to chant the Liturgy along with the cantor. We pray your visit with us is spiritually rewarding, holy and life-giving. Visit often!

F(E)ASTING

Paschal Season: Strictly speaking, we return to the usual Wednesday and Friday fasts after Thomas Sunday. It is the custom in some places, however, to keep the Bright Week custom of no fasting throughout the Paschal Season, while we are not permitted to kneel in prayer in honor of the Resurrection. According to this custom, we return to the ordinary weekly fast after we celebrate the *Kneeling Prayers* on Pentecost after the Divine Liturgy.

PARISH STUFF

New! The **Thomas Sunday Dinner** last Sunday was a very nice late morning brunch – great food, great fellowship, just a great overall time. Christ is risen!

Reminder! Lottery Ticket Raffle: Lottery goes off on *Sunday, July 7*. You can buy your tickets from Carole Bushak et al. – they are still \$5.00 each. *Also*, we are asking for donations of lottery tickets to be included in the prize. Anytime you have a chance to pick up one or more tickets, of various denominations, please give them to Carole and help us out with this fundraiser!

New! The **April Monthly Financial Report** is now posted on the hall bulletin board.

New! A Word about the Tomb. Everyone who came to Great Friday Vespers, or to the Tomb Vigil on Saturday is aware that we tried something new this year (actually it is very old, but new to most of us here). We left the Tomb on the floor instead of picking it up onto the platform that had been made for it many years ago. Also, we had it in the middle of the church for the Vespers service, and then moved it off to the side after the Paschal Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning. So, a word of explanation, and also a request.

The Word of Explanation (actually, a lot of words):

First, we did not pick up the Tomb this year for a couple of reasons.

1. It is very heavy, being made of carved and molded plaster, wood and plywood. We just do not have the people any more to pick the Tomb up safely to deposit it on the platform.
2. Also, the Tomb is starting to show major signs of wear. If you look closely, you will see the major crack in the plaster right in the middle of the Tomb just above the heads of everyone who comes to venerate the shroud. You will also find a hole in the plaster where someone inadvertently put their hand through the plaster while trying to pick it up a few years back. Besides, it has many chips and scratches in the facade. All of this damage has resulted from years of lifting lowering, moving the Tomb. While the wood backing can flex a little when it is being manhandled, plaster does not take so kindly to such pressure.

So, in order to preserve the health and well-being of the people who have been handling Tomb, and also preserve the well-being of the Tomb itself, we are no longer going to be able to pick the Tomb up like we did before.

Second, since we are no longer picking the Tomb up, there is no reason to have it permanently fixed on the side of the church as we have been doing. The Tomb is on wheels, and so is clearly designed to be wheeled around from place to place, not just pushed and pulled. Since this is the case, we placed the Tomb in the center of the church for Great Friday services, which is where it is supposed to be, according to the liturgical rubrics. It is only moved off to the side when it is time to remove the Plaščanica from the Tomb and placed on the altar for Pascha. Because there are wheels, and therefore easily moveable, I am betting that in the early days here, the Tomb was placed as we did this year.

Our Gifts to God and our Church

May 05, 2019

Attendance	34
Communions	14

Collections

Sunday	1448.00
Easter	100.00
All Votive Candles	120.00
Building Maintenance	100.00

Total Offerings: 6974.00

*Building and Repairs Donations to Date
\$3941! God bless your generosity!*

Third, the Tomb is clearly built to accommodate the old practice of crawling on one's knees down the aisle to venerate the Plašćanica. This is why it is built so low, and why the design of the facade of the Tomb *requires* a person to bow low on their knees to venerate the Plašćanica. Then, at some point in the past, folks here decided that they needed to accommodate those who walk up to the Tomb (probably not able to crawl all that well, as we have all gotten older), and so the base was built in order to pick the Tomb up. (Even so, we all know how difficult it still was to venerate the Plašćanica, because of that low-hanging facade.)

So, *this year*, when everyone came forward to venerate the Plašćanica on Great Friday and after, they had to get down on their knees to properly venerate it. This was very difficult for many, impossible for some. Many people were not really able to properly venerate it, even with our Altar Server helping folks get down and up (*Thanks, by the way*, to George, who decided to do that on his own).

The problem we now have:

This brings us to our current dilemma: on the one hand, raising the Tomb has become impractical if not downright dangerous, while hastening the process of it falling apart. On the other hand, leaving the Tomb lowered makes it all the harder for people to venerate it the way they would like to do on Great Friday, and so they lose a great part of what it means to participate in Great Friday services. *What is the solution?*

Here comes the request:

We are asking for your thoughts, opinions, feelings, etc., about what to do to resolve this problem. Please tell us how you felt about Great Friday, did you like it, hate it, were disturbed by, not bothered at all, etc. You can talk with me or any of the Council members to get your 2 cents (or 2 dollars) worth made known. *And*, if you happen to have an idea that might help toward a solution, please share that with us also! We have another year before we have to implement any new plan, but this is the time to be thinking and talking about it, while the experience is still fresh in our minds. Thanks ahead of time for your thoughts and your input. *Also, especially*, thanks for your patience and forbearance, as we continue to try to tweak things around the parish, we want to make your church experience, and the church experience of any and all who come in through our doors, as spiritual and fulfilling as possible!

Church Repairs: *We thank all of our parishioners* for your ongoing, active interest in the well-being of our parish. God bless us every one! So far, we have **\$3941** donated toward this new work. Total cost of this work was **\$3800**. *We thank you for your generosity. God bless!*

DIocese, DEanery AND ADDITIONAL STUFF

New! "'ZOE for Life' Presentation for the Greater Pittsburgh Area: Ministries Supporting the Holiness of Life in Word and Deed" Saturday, May 11, 2019. St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, 3230 Washington Pike Bridgeville, PA 15017. Details in the flyer on the bulletin board.

Reminder! Camp Nazareth Family Day Raffle! Tickets are now available. They are, as always, \$20 each. Please see Carole Bushak to purchase your dozen or so.

Reminder! Designer Purse Bash! This Saturday!!!! St. Nicholas Church, Homestead. Saturday, May 18. Doors open at 4 PM. Tickets are \$30 and include meal and 4 chances. More information on the bulletin board in the hall! Don't miss this one!

Reminder! 2nd IOCC Orthodox Homefront Workshop! Sunday, May 19, 2:00 – 4:30 PM, St. John the Baptist Church, 601 Boone Ave., Canonsburg, PA 15317. The *Homefront* helps parishes prepare for regional emergencies, disasters, and parish critical incidents, enhances their capability to respond, and connects parishes with a network of organizations and agencies active in emergencies. It also addresses how a parish can *plan to protect itself from hostile threats*. Members of the Parish Council are encouraged to attend. All attendees will be given a manual and a blueprint for how their Church can develop a plan for their parish. RSVP to Kevin Reck by Friday, May 10, at 724-941-9541 or kevinsreck@gmail.com. More info on hall bulletin board.

Reminder! Faith Night at PNC Park - this year *will not actually be at night*, **but an afternoon game! Saturday, June 22nd at 4:05** (Pittsburgh Pirates vs. San Diego Padres). Our sister parish of St. John the Baptist on the North Side is organizing a group of tickets (the price has not yet been determined). Please contact Wendy Martellotti at martellotti11@verizon.net or 412-583-6254 to reserve your tickets. (Please plan to pre-pay.) And Let's Go Bucs!

THE ORIGINS OF PASCHA AND GREAT WEEK: PART II CONTINUED: THE FINAL CHAPTER

Alkiviadis C. Calivas

THE TRANSPOSITION OF THE SERVICES

Throughout the centuries the faithful have observed Great Week and Pascha with fervor and great solemnity. Twice each day in the morning and in the evening, they would gather in the churches to celebrate the designated service at the appointed times. However, at some point in history the appointed times of the services began to change. The morning services were moved to the preceding evening and the evening services to the morning. It is not clear when and why these changes began to occur. By the middle of the nineteenth century, if not much sooner, it had become a common practice throughout the Orthodox Church. P. Rombotes in his book *Christian Ethics and Liturgics*, published in Athens in 1869 makes reference to the custom, as does the new Typikon of Constantinople. The reasons for the change appear to be ambiguous. Both Rombotes and the Typikon mention that it was done to accommodate the people. This may have meant any number of things. For example, the new Typikon hints at one such possibility. By mentioning the fact that the services were very lengthy, it implies that the transposition occurred in order to address this problem.^[47] Another reason for the change may have come about as a result of some sociopolitical factors during the Ottoman rule. For example, a rule regulating the time for the public assembly of the Christian populace may have resulted in the shift of the services. Sometimes, an imposed practice in one generation or period has a way of becoming permanent.

Perhaps the most plausible reason for the rearrangement of the divine services is based on late medieval attitudes concerning the time of the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and the reception of Holy Communion. According to long held popular beliefs, it was thought that the morning hours of the day were the most suitable and acceptable for the reception of Holy Communion. This being the case, it follows that all celebrations of the Divine Liturgy should be placed in the morning hours, regardless of the fact that some such celebrations were in fact nocturnal in nature.

An additional factor of considerable importance, which may also help explain the transfer of the morning services to the previous evening is the vigil or extended nocturnal service. There were several different types of vigils in the early and medieval Church. Their structure, content and length varied according to purpose and local custom and usage. They were conducted as late night, all-night or pre-dawn observances. Vigils were held on the eve of great feasts as a sign of watchfulness and expectation. We know from several early and medieval documents that the Passion of our Lord was observed liturgically in both Jerusalem and Constantinople with some type of vigil service.^[49] There is sufficient evidence to connect the present Great Friday Orthros (Matins) with these earlier vigil services. It is reasonable to assume from this that the present Orthros (Matins) was originally observed as a nocturnal celebration. Thus, as the order and hours of the divine services of Great Week began to change and shift, this service - and by extension the other morning services of the Week - was advanced to earlier evening hours.

Whatever the reasons for the transposition of the services, we have in fact inherited a particularly peculiar tradition, which circumvents both the normal liturgical practice as well as the natural order of things. Beginning with Great Monday and lasting through Great Saturday, the divine services are in an inverted position. Morning services are conducted the evening before and evening services are celebrated in the morning of the same day. Thus, on Palm Sunday evening, we conduct the Orthros (Matins) of Great Monday and on the morning of Great

Monday we celebrate the Vespers with the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy.[50] This pattern places us one half day ahead of the historical events and the natural order.

Of particular interest in this matter, is the order of the divine services for Great Thursday contained in the now defunct Typikon of the Great Church. The services of the Orthros (Matins) and the Trithekte in this Typikon are assigned to the morning hours, while a series of long services are designated for the evening hours. They are: the Vespers, followed by the Nipter (Washing of the feet), to which the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil is added beginning with the entrance of the Gospel. Before Holy Communion was distributed, the Patriarch also consecrated the Holy Myron. After the Divine Liturgy came the service of the Pannychis. In the Cathedral Office the Pannychis was a type of vigil service. This particular Pannychis on Great Thursday commemorated the passion of the Lord. The twelve Gospel pericopes narrating the events of the passion were read at this service. These pericopes are the same as those now read in the present service of the Orthros (Matins) of Great Friday, which in current practice is conducted on the evening of Great Thursday by anticipation.

From this description we learn at least two things. First, that Great Thursday evening in the late medieval church was supplied heavily with a series of long services. Second, the commemoration of the passion was conducted in the context of a vigil service (the Pannychis) on the night of Great Thursday. Because of the length of these services, I think we can safely assume they lasted well into the night. Can we assume also that Great Thursday evening with its overburdened liturgy became the pivotal day in the process that saw the breakdown of liturgical units and their transposition to earlier hours? The Vesperal Divine Liturgy, for the reasons stated above, may well have been the first to be dislodged from its original moorings, moving steadily forward in the day until it came to be celebrated in the morning hour. Next, the Pannychis or Vigil lost its original meaning and began to gravitate to an earlier hour. As these arrangements gradually evolved, the transposition of the morning services to the preceding evening became the established practice.

Difficult as it may be, however, I believe that the Church is obliged to press the issue through careful study and find a way to restore the proper liturgical order. She can do no less, if she is to be true to her quest for and commitment to liturgical renewal and reform. St. Symeon of Thessalonike (+ 1429), an inspired student and teacher of liturgy noted in one of his treatises that once the Church has clarified and determined correct liturgical usages, we are obliged to change even those things that have become a practice by default. While we must honor and reverence our liturgical inheritance, we are also obliged to look at it more carefully and to distinguish between Tradition and custom. Here let me stress the point that it is the Church in her collective wisdom that must authenticate the need and proceed to the reform of liturgical practice and usage.

THE ETHOS OF GREAT WEEK

The salvific events, which the Church remembers and celebrates in Great Week, are rooted in the inexhaustible mystery of God's ineffable love for the world that culminated in the incarnation, the death and resurrection of His only-begotten Son and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The solemnities of Great Week help us to enter and penetrate the depths of this mystery. Each day has a particular theme, focus and story. Each story is linked to the other; and all together, they are bound up in the central event: the Pascha of the cross and the resurrection. Everything converges on the person of Jesus Christ, who was betrayed, crucified and buried; and who rose on the third day. These events are the keystones of the structure of Great Week. Through them we embrace the mystery of our salvation. Their radiance helps us to see again more clearly the depth of our sins, both personal and collective. Their power bursts upon us to remind us again of God's immeasurable love, mercy and power. Their truth confronts us again with the most crucial challenge: "to dare to be saints by the power of God ... To dare to have holy respect and reverence for ourselves, as we are redeemed and sanctified by the blood of Christ . . . To dare to have the courage to grasp the great power that has been given to us, at the same time realizing that this power is always made perfect in infirmity, and that it is not a possession.

Great Week brings us before two realities. On the one hand we are made aware of the dreadful blight of human sin, issuing from the rebellion against God that resides in us and around us; on the other hand, we experience anew the omnipotent, transforming power of God's love and holiness.

From the beginning, Jesus and His gospel were met by a two—fold response: some believed and became His disciples; others rejected Him and came to hate him, and to despise and scorn His Gospel. These opposing attitudes towards the person and the message are especially evident in the events of Great Week. As the events unfold, false religiosity is unmasked (Mt 23.2-38); and the hellish bowels of the power of darkness are laid bare (Lk 22.53). Ensnared in the hearts of evil men - demonic, malignant and odious - the darkness seethes with deception, slander, devious—ness, greed, cowardice, treachery, betrayal, perfidy, rejection, hatred and aggressive hostility. Evil, in all its absurdity and fury, explodes on the Cross. But it is rendered powerless by the love of God (Lk 23.34). Christ is victor. Death is swallowed up. The tombs are emptied (Mt 27.52-53). Life is liberated. God and not man controls the destiny of the world.

In the course of the events of Great Week we encounter many contrasting figures and faces that call to judgement our own dispositions towards Christ. Great Week is not simply a time to remember; it is a time for repentance, for a greater and deeper conversion of the heart. Two hymns from the Orthros (Matins) of Great Tuesday say it best:

O Bridegroom, surpassing all in beauty, Thou hast called us to the spiritual feast of Thy bridal chamber. Strip from me the disfigurement of sin, through participation in Thy sufferings; clothe me in the glorious robe of Thy beauty, and in Thy compassion make me feast with joy at Thy Kingdom.

Come ye faithful, and let us serve the Master eagerly, for He gives riches to His servants. Each of us according to the measure that we have received, let us increase the talent of grace. Let one gain wisdom through good deeds; let another celebrate the Liturgy with beauty; let another share his faith by preaching to the uninstructed; let another give his wealth to the poor. So shall we increase what is entrusted to us, and as faithful stewards of His grace we shall be counted worthy of the Master's joy. Bestow this joy upon us, Christ our God, in Thy love for mankind.

In the solemnities of Great Week we experience afresh the embrace of God's love and forgiveness; the gift and promise of eternity and plenitude. Quickened and energized by the experience, we continue by faith to climb the ladder of divine ascent. Certain of His love, we live in the saving tension of joyous-sorrow until He comes. With a repentant heart we live the joy of hope and the rapture of expectation for things to come (I Cor 2.9).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As the order in the liturgical books clearly indicates, the full cycle of the daily services is observed on each day of Great Week at least in principle. In practice, however, parish communal worship is generally centered on the daily Orthros (Matins) and Vespers and the Divine Liturgies assigned to particular days. In the chapters of the full book, Fr. Alkiviadis gives a detailed explanation of these divine services as they are currently observed and practiced. Each chapter begins with a brief reflection to help introduce the reader to the inner meaning of the observance. This is followed by some general observations and comments on the liturgical celebration of the day. Then, the order of the divine services of the particular day is presented, together with a description of special rites and an analysis of the rubrics. Finally, the reader will find useful historical, liturgical and bibliographical information in the endnotes.

Christ Is Risen!

Indeed He Is Risen!

Feltamadt Krisztus

Valoban Feltamadott!

Christos Voskrese!

Vo Istinu Voskrese!

Al Massih Kam!

Hakkan Kam!

Christos Anesti!

Alithos Anesti!