



St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

205 Highland Avenue
Des Peres, MO 63122



A parish of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia



V. Rev. Fr. Martin Swanson, Pastor
Fr. Sergii Alekseev, Associate Pastor
Fr. Radomir Chkautovich, Attached

April 2016

Special Services and Events for April

Sat. 4/2 4:00 p.m. Pannyhida
Wed. 4/6 6:00 p.m. Vigil for the Annunciation
Thurs. 4/7 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Annunciation
Fri. 4/8 6:00 p.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy followed by a lite Lenten meal and an open discussion.
Sat. 4/9 4:00 p.m. Pannyhida
Wed. 4/13 8:00 a.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy
Wed. 4/13 3:00-5:00 p.m. Father Martin's office hours.
Wed. 4/13 6:00 p.m. Great Canon
Fri. 4/15 8:00 a.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy followed by a lite Lenten meal and an open discussion.
Sat. 4/16 6:00 p.m. Akathist to the Theotokos
Wed. 4/20 8:00 a.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
Wed. 4/20 3:00-5:00 p.m. Father Martin's office hours.
Fri. 4/22 6:00 Vesper & Matins for Lazarus Sat.
Sat. 4/23 9:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for Lazarus Sat.
Mon. 4/25 6:00 p.m. Matins and Confessions
Tues. 4/26 8:00 a.m. Pre-sanctified Liturgy
Tues. 4/27 7:00-10:00 Confessions
Wed. 4/27 7:00 p.m. Unction Service
Thurs. 4/28 9:00 a.m. Vespers with Liturgy of Great and Holy Thursday
Thurs. 4/28 7:00 p.m. Matins with the Reading of the 12 Passion Gospels
Fri. 4/29 9:00 a.m. Royal Hours
Fri. 4/29 3:00 p.m. Vespers and bringing out of the shroud
Fri. 4/29 4:30-6:00 p.m. Confession & Lite Lenten meal in the Hall
Fri. 4/29 6:00 p.m. Matins and procession w/shroud
Sat. 4/30 9:00 a.m. Vespers with Liturgy of Great & Holy Sat.
Sat. 4/30 9:00 p.m. Blessing of Baskets- Hall
Sat. 4/30 9:00 p.m. Reading of the Book of Acts
Sat. 4/30 11:30 p.m. Mid-night Office
Sun. 5/1 Midnight, Procession, Matins, Hours and D. Liturgy
Sun. 5/1 3:00 a.m. Blessing of Eggs and Baskets
Sun. 5/1 3:00 a.m. Break Fast in Hall
Sun. 5/1 2:00 p.m. Agape Vespers
Sun. 5/1 3:00 p.m. Festal Banquet in the Hall



The Lord's Entry Into Jerusalem

by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

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; (continued on Page 3)

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

St. Louis, MO

Parish News

Parish Prayer List for April

Matushka Katherine—Health
Angelina--Health
Nicholas Paris—Surgical Outcome
John Surgant Sr.--Health
Madeline Pisani—Health

(Please cut out and place at your icon corner)

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Martin to have yourself or your loved ones added to the parish prayer list. Let one of the Fathers know if you, a member of your family, or a friend is ill or hospitalized so that appropriate prayers and visits can be arranged. Please note: Hospitals don't notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.

USE eSCRIP

It costs \$0 and benefits the parish. Get Cards at the candle counter.

SERVERS WANTED!

Boys may begin to serve in the altar at St. Basil's from the time they begin to go to Confession (usually about 9 years old). We encourage all our boys to serve in the altar! For more information please contact Michael Orlando.

St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/StBasiltheGreatSTLMO

For daily edification and updates of interest, like our Facebook Fanpage! Parishioner Ron Wall brings the best of Orthodoxy to us there everyday! "Like" us to appear in your FB Newsfeed

The Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos (March 25/April 7)

An Explanation of the Icon

The Archangel Gabriel came to Mary to announce that she would conceive and bear a Son, even though she "knew no man" In the icon, he carries a staff, a symbol of being a messenger. The Archangel's right hand is extended toward Mary as he announces the blessing that is being bestowed upon her. He greets her with these words: "Rejoice, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;

blessed art thou among women" (luke 1: 28-29) Note the position of Archangel Gabriel's feet as he runs to share the good news with Mary. We are called to act similarly when God sends us!

The Mother of God sits on an elevated seat, showing that she is "greater in honor than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim." Her veil bears three stars used to represent her ever-virginity: before, during, and after Christ's birth.

Mary is shown wearing a veil typical of Jewish women of the period, which also reveals to us her humility and piety. The veil is red, the colour of divinity, while the clothes under the veil are green or blue, the colours of humanity. (This is the exact opposite of the usual icon depiction of Christ: Who has humanity worn upon His eternal, divine, nature.)

Her right hand is shown upwards: a gesture that may indicate both surprise at news beyond understanding, and acceptance of God's will. Her posture, with her head lowered also shows humility and acceptance. She gives her whole self freely to God, submitting to His will.

The Theotokos holds a spindle of scarlet thread in her left hand. Holy Tradition tells us as Christ's Body begins to be woven in her womb, she was weaving a purple and scarlet curtain for the tabernacle in the Temple--the very one that is torn in two at the moment of His death on the Cross.



St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

St. Louis, MO

When to Make Prostrations

(continued from Page 1) 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,

Prostrations during the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

by Fr. Sergii Alekseev

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Great Lent is the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. The service is structured as the Vespers at which the faithful may receive the Holy Communion. It is important to know that the faithful make prostrations during certain moments of the Liturgy. We make a prostration and remain prostrated on the ground for the duration of the reading of the Third Antiphon / Stasis of the 18th Kathisma – at that time the Holy Presanctified Gifts are transferred from the Holy Altar Table to the Table of Oblation.

We make a prostration when the priest comes out on the amvon with a lit candle and the censer and exclaims: "The light of Christ enlighteneth all".

During the singing of "Let my prayer be set forth ..." (when the Royal Doors are open and the priest censures in front of the Holy Altar Table), the order of the service calls for the faithful to prostrate when the Reader chants the verse and arise when the choir sings the refrains. However, in the parish practice the faithful remain prostrated during the entire time when the beautiful hymn is sung by the Reader and choir.

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. (from www.pravoslavie.ru)

We make three prostrations for the prayer of Venerable Ephraim (it is read twice in the course of the service, with the exception of the Holy Wednesday when it is said thrice).

We remain prostrated during the singing of "Now the Host of Heaven ..." During the Great Entrance with the Holy Presanctified Gifts choir members also prostrate to the ground, as the Entrance takes place in silence.

We make a prostration before singing of "Our Father ..." We make a prostration when the priest comes out of the altar with the Holy Gifts and says "With fear of God and with faith, draw nigh".

If, for reasons of age or/and health, you simply cannot make a prostration, then at the times when prostrations are to be made you should stand with your head bowed low.

P.S. Do not worry, the priests make even more prostrations in the altar.



St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

St. Louis, MO

The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

About the Prayer of Venerable Ephraim the Syrian

On the days of the Great Lent, with the exception of Saturday and Sunday morning, we hear the penitential prayer of Venerable Ephraim the Syrian “O Lord and Master of my life ...” Many of us, who are accustomed to coming to church for the Lenten services, are used to this prayer and know what bows accompany the petitions of the prayer. But let us ask ourselves: have we made St Ephraim’s prayer a part of our daily prayer rule? If we have not, then this should be corrected. The prayer “O Lord and Master of my life ...” should bring a natural closure to our prayers in the morning and in the evening. If you do not have the Jordanville Prayer Book, which contains the text of the prayer, please cut the prayer’s text given below and use it at home.

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, and idle talking give me not. (Prostration)

But rather a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me Thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my failings and not condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

O God, cleanse me a sinner. (12 times, each time with a bow from the waist)

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, and idle talking give me not. But rather a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me Thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my failings and not condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

О Молитве Святого Ефрема Сирина

В дни Великого поста на каждой службе, за исключением субботних и воскресных дней, мы слышим покоянную молитву преподобного Ефрема Сирина «Господи и Владыко живота моего ...». Многие, посещающие великопостные службы, привыкли к этой молитве и знают, какими поклонами она должна быть сопровождаема. Но вот вопрос: включаем ли мы молитву преп. Ефрема Сирина в наше домашнее молитвенное правило? А это следует делать. Покоянная молитва «Господи и Владыко живота моего ...» должна стать гармоничным завершением, как нашего утреннего молитвенного правила, так и вечернего.

Ниже прилагается текст молитвы, который можно вырезать для повседневного домашнего пользования

Господи и Владыко живота моего, дух праздности, уныния, любоначала и празднословия не даждь ми. (земное поклон)

Дух же целомудрия, смиренномудрия, терпения и любви даруй ми, рабу Твоему. (земное поклон)

Ей, Господи, Царю, даруй ми зрети моя прегрешения и не осуждати брата моего, яко благословен еси во веки веков. Аминь. (земное поклон)

Боже, очисти мя грешнаго. (12 раз с 12-тью поясными

поклонами)

Господи и Владыко живота моего, дух праздности, уныния, любоначала и празднословия не даждь ми. Дух же целомудрия, смиренномудрия, терпения и любви даруй ми, рабу Твоему. Ей, Господи, Царю, даруй ми зрети моя прегрешения и не осуждати брата моего, яко благословен еси во веки веков. Аминь. (земное поклон)

Живота моего – жизни моей, дух праздности – склонность к празности или лени, уныние – безнадежность, любоначалие – властолюбие, то есть любовь начальствовать и властвовать над другими, празднословие – произношение пустых слов (пустословие), а также дурных и бранных слов, не даждь ми – не дай мне.

Целомудрие – здравомыслие, благоразумие, а также чистота и непорочность души, смиренномудрие – сознание своего несовершенства и недостойности перед Богом, и когда не думаем о себе, что мы лучше других (смирение), терпение – терпение нужно при перенесении каких-либо неудобств, лишений и несчастий, а также нужно для того, чтобы начатое хорошее дело довести до конца, любви – любовь (к Богу и ближним).

Ей, Господи – о, Господи, даруй мне зрети – дай мне видеть, осознавать.

Под братом здесь подразумевается всякий другой человек.

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

St. Louis, MO

Preparing for Holy Week

Holy Week: An Explanation

SOURCE: Feast of Feasts (www.pravoslavie.ru)

Great Lent and Holy Week are two separate fasts, and two separate celebrations. Great Lent ends on Friday of the fifth week (the day before Lazarus Saturday). Holy Week begins immediately thereafter. Let's explore the meaning of each of the solemn days of Passion Week.

Lazarus Saturday: Lazarus Saturday is the day which begins Holy Week. It commemorates the raising of our Lord's friend Lazarus, who had been in the tomb four days. This act confirmed the universal resurrection from the dead that all of us will experience at our Lord's Second Coming. This miracle led many to faith, but it also led to the chief priest's and Pharisees' decision to kill Jesus (John 11:47-57).

Palm Sunday (The Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem): Our Lord enters Jerusalem and is proclaimed king - but in an earthly sense, as many people of His time were seeking a political Messiah. Our Lord is King, of course, but of a different type - the eternal King prophesied by Zechariah the Prophet. We use palms on this day to show that we too accept Jesus as the true King and Messiah of the Jews, Who we are willing to follow - even to the cross.

Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday: The first thing that must be said about these services, and most of the other services of Holy Week, is that they are "sung" in anticipation. Each service is rotated ahead twelve hours. The evening service, therefore, is actually the service of the next morning, while the morning services of Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday are actually the services of the coming evening.

Understanding that, let's turn to the Services of Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (celebrated Palm Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evening). The services of these days are known as the Bridegroom or Nymphios Orthros Services. At the first service of Palm Sunday evening, the priest carries the icon of Christ the Bridegroom in procession, and we sing the "Hymn of the Bridegroom." We behold Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church, bearing the marks of His suffering, yet preparing a marriage Feast for us in God's Kingdom.

Each of these Bridegroom Orthros services has a particular theme. On Holy Monday, the Blessed Joseph, the son of Jacob the Patriarch, is commemorated. Joseph is often seen as a Type of Christ. Joseph was betrayed by his brothers, thrown into a pit, and sold into slavery by them. In the same way, our Lord was rejected, betrayed by His own, and sold into the slavery of death. The Gospel reading for the day is about the barren fig

tree, which Christ cursed and withered because it bore no fruit. The fig tree is a parable of those who have heard God's word, but who fail to bear the fruit of obedience. Originally the withering of the fig tree was a testimony against those Jews who rejected God's word and His Messiah. However, it is also a warning to all people, in all times, of the importance of not only hearing the God's word, but putting it into action.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins is read on Holy Tuesday. It tells the story of the five virgins who filled their lamps in preparation for receiving the bridegroom while the other five allowed their lamps to go out, and hence were shut out of the marriage feast. This parable is a warning that we must always be prepared to receive our Lord when He comes again. The theme of the day is reinforced by the expostelation hymn we sing: "I see Thy Bridal Chamber adorned, O my Savior, but have no wedding garment that I may enter. O Giver of Light, enlighten the vesture of my soul, and save me." The theme of Holy Wednesday is repentance and forgiveness. We remember the sinful woman, Kassiane, who anointed our Lord in anticipation of His death. Her repentance and love of Christ is the theme of the wonderful "Hymn of Kassiane" which is chanted on this night, reminding us one more time, before "it is too late," that we too may be forgiven if we repent.

Holy Unction: The Mystery or Sacrament of Holy Unction is celebrated on Holy Wednesday evening. Actually this service can be celebrated any time during the year, especially when one is ill. However, because of our need for forgiveness and spiritual healing, we offer this service during Holy Week for the remission of our sins. We should prepare for this service in a prayerful way, as we do for Holy Communion.

Great and Holy Thursday: On Holy Thursday we turn to the last events of our Lord and His Passion. Thursday morning begins with a Vespers Divine Liturgy commemorating the Mystical Supper. As previously mentioned, this is actually Holy Thursday evening's service celebrated in the morning in anticipation. Everyone who is able should make an effort to receive Holy Communion at this service as it was at the Mystical Supper that our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist. At this Liturgy a second Host is consecrated and kept in the Tabernacle. It is from this Host that Holy Communion is distributed to the shut-ins and the sick throughout the coming year.

Thursday evening actually begins the services of Great and Holy Friday. The service of the Twelve Passion Gospels commemorates the solemn time of our Lord's Crucifixion. After the reading of the fifth Gospel, the holy cross is carried around the church in procession, and Christ's body is nailed to the cross in the center of the church.

St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church St. Louis, MO

Preparing for Holy Week



Great and Holy Friday: This is a day of strict fast. As little as possible should be eaten on this day. It is the only day in the entire year that no

Divine Liturgy of any kind can be celebrated. In the morning we celebrate the Royal Hours. These solemn hours are observed as we read the various accounts and hymns concerning the crucifixion. In the afternoon we celebrate the Vesper service of the taking down of Christ's body from the cross. During the Gospel reading, our Lord's body is taken off the cross and wrapped in a new, white linen sheet. This act commemorates the removal of Christ's body from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38-42). Later in the service, the Epitaphios, or winding-sheet, with Christ's body on it is carried in procession and placed in the recently decorated tomb. In the evening the Lamentations Orthros service is sung. This service begins in a solemn manner, but by the end of the service we

are already anticipating the Resurrection of our Lord. Remember again, that the Holy Friday evening Orthros is actually the first service of Holy Saturday, the day in which we commemorate our Lord's body resting in the tomb while His all-pure soul descends into Hades to free the faithful of the Old Covenant.

Great and Holy Saturday: This day is a day of hope and waiting. In the morning we celebrate a Vespers Divine Liturgy which commemorates Christ's victory over death. Bright vestments are worn as we anticipate Christ's Resurrection. Laurel leaves are strewn throughout the church during the service, because in the ancient world laurel leaves were a sign of victory. As the leaves are strewn, the choir chants "Arise O God and Judge the earth, for to Thee belong all the nations." The Old Testament story of Jonah in the belly of the whale is read at this service because Jonah is seen in the Church as a Type of Christ. As Jonah was three days in the belly of the great fish, and was then safely deposited back onto land, so our Lord was three days in the tomb before His glorious Resurrection. The Vespers Divine Liturgy of Holy Saturday concludes the services of Holy Week, and brings us to the eve of Great and Holy Pascha.

