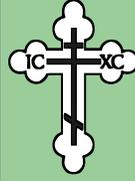


## St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

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  
V. Rev. Fr. Radomir Chkautovich, Attached

**April 2018**

### The Inner Meaning of the Paschal Greeting

by Metropolitan Seraphim (Chicagov) the New Martyr

It follows that we are celebrating the greatest Christian feast day, the feast of all feasts, for Christianity itself is founded upon the Resurrection of Christ. But should our celebration be limited to observing the church rubrics and to our presence in church? Where is the inner, spiritual meaning of this feast? Can remembrance alone of the great and global event of the Resurrection of Christ bring us salvation?

We are forgiven, we are saved, we are redeemed. Christ is Risen! These words say everything: they are the foundation of our faith, hope, and love; of our Christian life; of all our wisdom and enlightenment; of the Holy Church, heartfelt prayer, and our entire future. These words destroy all human calamity, death, and evil; they give life, blessedness, and freedom! What miraculous power! Can one grow tired of repeating them? Christ is Risen! Can we ever have enough of hearing them? Christ is Risen!

But do we all understand the true meaning of these words: Christ is Risen? What does this mean: Christ is Risen? After all, Christ was risen neither today, nor yesterday, but many, many centuries ago. Who in our time can doubt that Christ indeed rose on the third day following His death? No one! In that case, to what are we witnessing when we respond to the greeting “Christ is Risen!” with the words “Truly He is Risen”? Are we witnessing only to our faith, or to something else as well?

Christians should participate in the very Resurrection of Christ. The Apostle Paul says: And if Christ be not raised, your faith

is vain, ye are yet in your sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). It follows that we are celebrating the greatest Christian feast day, the feast of all feasts, for Christianity itself is founded upon the Resurrection of Christ. But should our celebration be limited to observing the church rubrics and to our presence in church? Where is the inner, spiritual meaning of this feast? Can remembrance alone of the great and global event of the Resurrection of Christ bring us salvation?

No, Christians should participate in the very Resurrection of Christ! Participate how? Through the Mystery of Confession and the Communion of the Holy Body and Live-Giving Blood of the Savior. During the days of Great Lent – the days of repentance, cleansing, and rebirth – we should renew our hearts in order to rise with Christ. Therefore, whoever has not participated in the very Resurrection of Christ has not understand and does not have within himself the true meaning of the words “Christ is Risen!” and the reply “Truly He is Risen!”

Likewise, the reply “Truly He is Risen!” alone does not demonstrate that we have the Resurrection of Christ in us and in our hearts. It is confirmed by joy in the Lord and demonstrated by love for Christ. Whoever loves, remembers God’s love and has no doubt in it. But remember, beloved brothers and sisters, how in your recent confession you repented for sometimes murmuring against God and for doubting His mercy; remember how you accused the Lord for your undeserved sorrows and unbearable sufferings; and even for the unwillingness to hear your prayers!

Remember how, living in sin, you were inclined to think the Lord merciless, both deaf and blind to (continued page 3)

#### Special Services & Events for April

4/2 Mon. 7:00-10:00 p.m. Confession  
4/3 Tues. 8:00 a.m. Presanctified Liturgy  
4/3 Tues. 7-10 p.m. Confession  
4/4 Wed. 6:00 p.m. Holy Unction Service  
4/5 Thurs. 8:00 a.m. D. Liturgy for Holy Thursday  
4/5 Thurs. 6:00 p.m. Reading of the 12 Passion Gospels  
4/6 Fri. 4:00 p.m. Vespers for the taking down of our Lord’s body from the Cross  
4/6 Fri. 6:00 p.m. Vigil for Annunciation and Holy Saturday  
4/6 Fri. 9:00 a.m. Royal Hours  
4/7 Sat. 9 a.m. D. Liturgy for the Annunciation and Holy Saturday

4/7 Sat. 9:30 p.m. First blessing of Easter Baskets  
4/7 Sat. 10:00 p.m. Reading of the Acts of the Apostles  
4/7 Sat. 10:30 p.m. Second blessing of Easter Baskets  
4/7 Sat. 11:30 p.m. Mid-night office for Pascha  
4/8 Sun. Midnight Matins and Procession for Pascha  
4/8 Sun. 12:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy for Pascha followed by the blessing of Easter baskets and the breaking of the fast.  
4/8 Sun. 2 p.m. Agape Vespers  
4/8 Sun. 3 p.m. Festal Banquet Parish Hall  
4/13 Fri. 6:00 moleban and blessing of water for the Feast of the Life Giving Spring.  
4/17 Tues. Radonitsa 9:00 a.m. Pannyhida St. Basil’s  
10:30 a.m. Pannyhida St. Matthew’s Cemetery

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

## Parish News



Photo by Matushka Svetlana Kondrasova

### **Wonderworking Kursk Root Icon Visits St. Basil's**

St. Basil's parish was blessed to host a visit from the miracle working Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God during the fifth week of Great Lent. The icon was with us for the service of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and the reading of the life of St. Mary of Egypt. Especially edifying was the Icon's presence on Friday evening during the Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos which is sung at Orthodox Churches throughout the world on this day.

The icon first revealed herself to a hunter in the province of Kursk in Russia on September 8th 1295. It was found lying at the base of a tree and when picked up a stream of healing water gushed forth. A chapel was soon build to house the icon, but was later burned down by invaders who tried to destroy the icon. However, the icon miraculously escaped destruction. During the ensuing centuries untold thousands of miracles have occurred including the healing of St. Seraphim of Sarov who was miraculously cured of a childhood illness while praying before the icon in 1770. Among the most widely reported miracle was the icon's survival from a devastating bomb blast in 1898 which was set by a group of anarchists hoping undermine the faith of the people. Amidst devastation the icon remained unscathed.

In 1920, after the Bolshevik revolution, the holy icon left its native land and was removed to the ROCOR Synod of Bishops headquarters in Belgrade, Serbia. Since that time the miraculous icon has become a symbol of consolation for all who approach it with sincere prayer. Since the 1940's the icon has traveled the world over and has served as a beacon of hope for the Russian people in the diaspora. Today the icon is

housed in the Synodal Cathedral of the Sign in New York City, but travels annually to Orthodox Churches across the United States and all corners of the globe. Recently the icon visited its native city of Kursk where over a million faithful stood in line for hours to be able to pray for a few seconds before the holy icon.

During the miraculous icon's visit to St. Basil's it was taken for services at St. John Chrysostom Church in House Springs, Holy Dormition Church in Benld, Il., Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in St. Louis, and St. Mary of Egypt Chapel in Columbia, Mo. While at St. Basil's over 100 people came to pray for the heavenly intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos.

### **Great Lent has ended and Passion Week begins!**

On Friday we end the 40 days of Great Lent and enter into Passion (Holy) Week. During the forty days of Great Lent we have hopefully engaged in increased spiritual labor to condition ourselves for the rigors of Holy Week during which we are called to follow, to the extent that we are able, on the path of Christ's suffering and his death on the cross. The way is open for us and we're all called to walk with Christ through the services provided by the Church. This is a great blessing for us and the most authentic way to experience the joy of his resurrection on Pascha morning.

Don't ignore the call! Make every effort to attend the services of Holy Week and don't let vain excuses and worldly alibies deter you. For those we make the effort there is a great blessing in store for you. And remember what St. John Chrysostom said "...those who come at the eleventh hour deserve the same wage as those who come at the first hour".

### **Delicious Treat Available to Benefit the Parish**

The parish's St. Macrina Sisterhood is hard at work making delicious Pascha breads for your holiday table. You may order your bread from Matushka Svetlana or any member of the Sisterhood, and all proceeds will go to benefit the parish. We hope that every member of the parish will buy at least one loaf—you'll be glad that you did! The ever popular pierogies are once again available from the nuns of Holy Archangels monastery in House Springs. Both the Pascha breads and the pierogies can be purchased in the parish hall.

### **Parish Prayer List**

Reader Gennady Barabtarlo (Health)

Boris Artemov (Health)

Archimandrite Seraphim of Holy Cross Hermitage (Health)

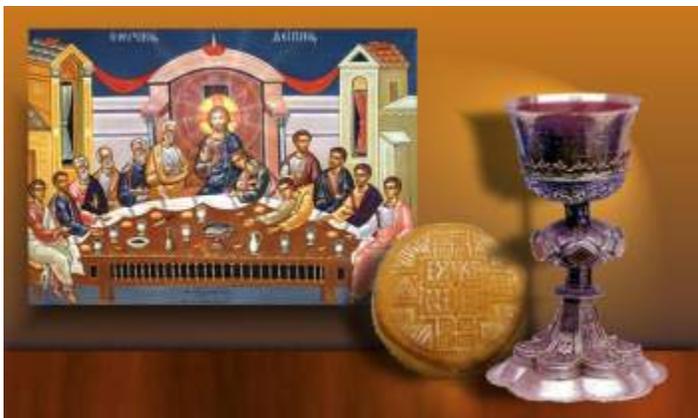
Andrew Johnstone— successful surgery on April 16

Caroline Orlando (Health)

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask (continued page 3)

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

## The Eucharist and Christ's Sacrifice at Golgotha



### The Relationship between the Eucharist and Christ's Sacrifice at Golgotha

by Subdeacon Thomas Nichols

The Eucharist itself constitutes nothing less than Christ's actual sacrifice at Golgotha. To partake of the Eucharist, then, is to partake of the crucified Lord, and, indeed, to, as St. John Chrysostom writes, "drink from [His] side" (Homily 85, on the Gospel of John). More than this, to receive the Eucharist is to actualize the salvation and expiation from sin which Christ accomplished at Golgotha. Which is to say that the forgiveness of sin and the redemption wrought through Christ's sacrifice are only realized in the partaking of the Eucharist. This is why Jesus Christ stated unambiguously that salvation was impossible apart from the consumption of His flesh and blood (John 6:53); this is why Christ linked His forthcoming sacrifice at Golgotha with the drinking of His blood and the remission of sin (Matthew 26:28). These elements of our

salvation—Christ's death on the cross, the eating of His body and blood, and the remission of sins—are one, and no element exists apart from the other.

Although, as Elder Cleopa of Romania states, "the Eucharistic sacrifice...is the sacrifice of Golgotha" (Christian Mysteries, 51), some clarifications should be made in this regard. For one, the Eucharistic sacrifice that occurs at the Divine Liturgy does not constitute a repetition of the sacrifice of Golgotha. The celebrating priest does not re-crucify the Lord of glory. For, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..." (Hebrews 9:28). Rather, the Eucharistic sacrifice is, as the eminent theologian Fr. John McGuckin notes, "the repeated entrance into the one great act of Christ's self-sacrifice..." (Orthodox Church, 288). Which is to say that, although we are temporally far removed from Christ's sacrifice offered at Golgotha, the Eucharistic sacrifice is a mystical participation in this sacrifice. Unlike Christ's sacrifice at Golgotha, however, the Eucharistic sacrifice is also, according to Fr. Michael Pomazansky, "passionless and bloodless [and deathless], since it is performed after the Resurrection of the Savior..." For this reason, the Orthodox Church casts a wary eye on Roman Catholic accounts of Host's expelling blood and the like, understanding such to be more the work of demons than of God. That the Eucharistic sacrifice can be at one and the same time the sacrifice at Golgotha and yet remain passionless, bloodless, and deathless is difficult to comprehend. The impenetrability of this notion, however, is perfectly consistent with the impenetrability of the Mystery of the Eucharist itself and, indeed, contributes to our understanding of it as a Mystery.

(continued from page 1) your woes and needs! But now, having united with Christ, do you recognize that He is a God of love and mercy, and not of punishment? If you have indeed recognized this truth, then you have undoubtedly understood

God in His designs and loved the Lord with a pure heart. Then Christ is risen in you, and you can now consciously reply to the joyful Christian greeting "Christ is Risen!" with the words "Truly He is Risen!" Amen. (from [www.pravmir.com](http://www.pravmir.com))

(continued from page 2) us to pray for them in your prayers this month.

parish. Please find sign up instructions next to the stair case in the hall.

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.

### **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.

### **USE eSCRIP**

It costs \$0 and benefits the parish. Get Cards at the candle counter. Sign up for the AMAZON rebate program to have a portion of you Amazon purchase donated by them to the

### **St. Basil's Parish Facebook Page:**

[www.facebook.com/StBasiltheGreatSTLMO](http://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

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

## A Journey through Holy Week and Pascha

### **HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA**

The major themes and meaning of each day  
by Metropolitan Nektarios of Hong Kong and South East Asia

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.

### **Saturday of Lazarus**

On this day, the Saturday before Palm Sunday, we celebrate the raising of the holy and righteous friend of Christ, Lazarus, who had been four days in the grave.

"Having fulfilled Forty Days... we ask to see the Holy Week of Thy Passion." With these words sung at Vespers of Friday, Lent comes to its end and we enter into the annual commemoration of Christ's suffering, death and Resurrection. It begins on the Saturday of Lazarus. The double feast of Lazarus' resurrection and the Entrance of the Lord to Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) is described in liturgical texts as the "beginning of the Cross" and is to be understood therefore, within the context of the Holy Week. The common Troparion of these days explicitly affirms that by raising Lazarus from the dead Christ confirmed the truth of general resurrection. It is highly significant that we are led into the darkness of the Cross by one of the twelve major feasts of the Church. Light and joy shine not only at the end of Holy Week but also at its beginning. All those familiar with Orthodox worship know the peculiar, almost paradoxical character of Lazarus Saturday services. It is a Sunday, i.e., a Resurrection, service on a Saturday, a day usually devoted to the liturgical commemoration of the dead. And the joy which permeates these services stresses one central theme: the forthcoming victory of Christ over Hades. Hades is the Biblical term for that unescapable darkness and destruction that swallows all life and poisons with its shadow the whole world. But now -- with Lazarus' resurrection -- "death begins to tremble." For there the decisive duel between Life and Death begins and it gives us the key to the entire liturgical mystery of Pascha. In the early church Lazarus Saturday was called "announcement of Pascha", it announces and anticipates, indeed, the wonderful light and peace of the next Saturday - the Great and Holy Saturday, the day of the Lifegiving Tomb.

### **Palm Sunday**

On this day, Palm Sunday, we celebrate the resplendent and glorious feast of the entry of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ into Jerusalem.

Palm Sunday celebrates the glorious and brilliant feast of the Entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem (John 12:1-18). Zechariah had prophesied the entrance of the Messiah into Jerusalem, saying: "Rejoice greatly ... O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King comes unto Thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass", Zech. 9:9. The contemporary Jews associated this prophecy with the expected Messiah. This action of Christ testifies to His nature as Messiah, but with the definite declaration that His Kingdom was not of this world. The main road leading to Jerusalem was covered with palm trees. The multitudes, with palm branches in their hands, spread their cloaks on the road as a show of respect, crying out "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord." A custom of distributing branches of palms to the people in the Church prevails to this day.

During the remainder of Holy Week, the Church advances its liturgical life by about twelve hours, celebrating morning services the night before, and evening services in the morning.

On Palm Sunday evening, the Church celebrates the Orthros (Matins) of Holy Monday, in the first of four "Bridegroom Services." Christ is called the "Bridegroom" because in His Passion, He gives His life for His Bride, the people of God, the Church, just as a husband will sacrifice everything for his wife and family.

### **Holy and Great Monday**

On great and holy Monday we commemorate blessed Joseph the handsome; and also the fig tree that was cursed by the Lord and then withered.

In the Orthros of Holy Monday, celebrated Palm Sunday evening, the Church remembers the blessed and noble Joseph and the fig tree which was cursed and withered by the Lord.

### **Holy and Great Tuesday**

On great and holy Tuesday, we commemorate the parable of the ten virgins from the holy Gospel.

In the Orthros of Holy Tuesday, celebrated Holy Monday evening, the Church remembers the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), who were waiting for the arrival of the Bridegroom at a wedding feast.

### **Holy and Great Wednesday**

On great and holy Wednesday, as the most divine fathers ordained, we commemorate the harlot who anointed the Lord's feet with fragrant ointment, since this occurred shortly before the saving Passion.

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

## Holy Week and Pascha

In the Orthros of Holy Wednesday celebrated on Holy Tuesday evening, the Church remembers the anointing of Christ with myrrh by the woman in the house of Simon, the leper, in Bethany. This woman demonstrated her repentance and her warm faith toward our Lord. On this evening we hear the beautiful Hymn of Kassiane, which is a hymnological reflection on the repentance of this woman.

### THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY UNCTION

The Sacrament of Holy Unction takes place on Holy Wednesday evening. The Sacrament is for the healing of body and soul. In Orthodox thought, healing is connected to repentance, confession, and the remission of sins by the Lord. Holy Unction is for cleansing sins and renewing the body and the spirit of the faithful. Holy Unction is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church, and it has its origin in the practice of the early Church as recorded in the Epistle of James (5:14-15). At the end of the service, the priest anoints the people with Holy Oil.

### THE MATINS OF HOLY THURSDAY

In the Orthros of Holy Thursday, celebrated on Holy Wednesday evening, the Church remembers the washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the Holy Eucharist, the Prayer of Christ at the Last Supper as recorded in the Gospel of John, and the betrayal.

### HOLY AND GREAT THURSDAY

On holy and great Thursday the godly Fathers, who have arranged all things well, received from the divine Apostles and the sacred Gospels and in turn handed down to us, that today we should celebrate four things: the sacred Washing of Feet, the Mystical Supper (that is, the tradition of what we know as the awesome Mysteries of Holy Communion), the High Priestly Prayer, and finally the Betrayal itself.

In the morning, the Vespers of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated. At this Divine Liturgy, the Church commemorates the institution of the Holy Eucharist by the Lord at His Last Supper with His disciples. Here, Christ presented bread and wine as His body and blood, which form the core of the new covenant between God and His people, the Church.

In the evening, in the Orthros of Holy Friday, the Church recalls the Passion of the Lord, from His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, His agony and arrest at Gethsemane, His trial by Jewish religious leaders and Roman authorities, His beatings and mocking, and crucifixion and death on the Cross. This service is long, with twelve readings from the Gospels recounting the events, but its content is dramatic and moving.

After the reading of the fifth Gospel comes the procession with the icon of the Crucified Christ around the church.

### Holy and Great Friday

On this day, Holy and Great Friday, we celebrate the awesome, holy, and saving Passion of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ: the spitting, the blows, the buffeting, the mockery, the reviling, the purple robe, the reed, the sponge, the vinegar, the nails, the spear, and above all, the Cross and Death which He condescended to endure willingly for our sakes. Also the saving confession on the cross of the grateful Robber who was crucified with Him.

In the morning, the four "Royal Hours" are read. These services consist of hymns, psalms, and readings from the Old and New Testaments, all related prophetically and ethically to the Person of Christ.

Usually in mid-afternoon, Great Vespers is chanted. During this service, we hear the story of the Crucifixion, but with attention paid to the death of Christ, the work of Joseph of Arimathea to secure the body of Christ from Pilate, His removal from the cross, and His burial.

At one point in the reading, the Body of Christ is removed from the cross, wrapped in a white cloth and is brought into the sanctuary. Following the reading, the priest carries the icon of the Epitaphios through the church and places it in the Sepulchre (the kouvouklion), which has been decorated with flowers.

### HOLY AND GREAT FRIDAY EVENING – THE LAMENTATIONS

On Holy Friday evening, we sing the Orthros of Holy Saturday, consisting of psalms, hymns and readings, dealing with the death of Christ. During the Orthros, the congregation will join in chanting the Lamentations, hymns of praise to the Lord and relating His ultimate triumph over death. During this service the Epitaphios icon is carried in procession around the church. In some parishes the entire flower-bedecked Sepulchre, symbolizing the Tomb, is carried in the procession.

### Holy and Great Saturday

On great and holy Saturday, we celebrate the burial of the divine Body and the descent into Hades of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through which He recalled our human race from corruption and passed it over into life eternal.

On Holy Saturday morning, the Vespers of the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. In this Liturgy, the Resurrection of Christ is celebrated and the triumph over death is proclaimed in the

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

### Let Us Attend!

hymns and the readings from the Old and New Testament. There is a strong theme of baptism in this liturgy, because in the ancient Church, the catechumens would be baptized in this evening vigil of Pascha.

**Holy and Great Saturday night- The Resurrection Service**  
At midnight Saturday, the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated. Before midnight, the Odes of Lamentation of the previous day are repeated. The Orthros of the Resurrection begins in complete darkness. The priest takes light from the vigil light and gives it to the faithful, who are holding candles. The priest sings, "Come, receive light from the unwaning light, and glorify Christ, who arose from the dead." Just a short while later, the priest reads the resurrection story from the Gospel of Mark (16:1-8) and leads the congregation in singing the Resurrection Hymn, Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life." Following, the Orthros service continues and leads into the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

### **Holy and Great Sunday of Pascha**

On the holy and great Sunday of Pascha we celebrate the very life-bearing Resurrection of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

### THE AGAPE VESPERS

At some point on Sunday afternoon the faithful gather once more for Great Vespers, With lighted candles they sing, "Christ is risen." The people greet one another with the salutation, "Christ is Risen", which is answered, "Truly He is Risen". In the Great Vespers, the Gospel according to John (20:19-25) is read in various languages, proclaiming the Good News of Resurrection all over the universe without discrimination. The fruit of faith in the Resurrection of the Lord is love in His Name; therefore, this day is called "Sunday of Agape."

For the next forty days, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Resurrection of Christ. (from [www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))



### **Let us Attend!**

by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

Therefore, no matter what we experience, or no matter how little we experience, let us attend these services, let us immerse ourselves in what they have to say to us. We will not try to forcibly squeeze some feelings out of ourselves: it is enough to watch; it is enough to hear. Let the events themselves—for these are events and not just memories—break us in body and

soul. Then, when we forget ourselves and think rather of Christ, about what is really taking place during these days, we will reach also that Great Saturday when Christ is laid to rest in the tomb—and we also will find rest. When at night we hear the announcement of the Resurrection, we too will be able to suddenly come alive from that terrible numbness, from that terrible death of Christ, from Christ's dying, of which we shall partake at least a little during these days of the Passion. (from [www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))