



SAINT 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

CLERGY

Archpriest Sergii Alekseev, Parish Rector
Archpriest Martin Swanson, Dean
Protopriest Radomir Chkautovich
Deacon Ephraim Galloway
Deacon Thomas Nichols

Schedule of Services

- **Memorial Saturday**
Sat. Apr. 3 9 a.m. Panihida
- **Third Sunday of Great Lent**
Sat. Apr. 3 5 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Apr. 4 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Annunciation**
Tue. Apr. 6 6 p.m. Vigil
Wed. Apr. 7 8 a.m. Vesperal Divine Liturgy
- **Memorial Saturday**
Sat. Apr. 10 9 a.m. Panihida
- **Fourth Sunday of Great Lent**
Sat. Apr. 10 5 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Apr. 11 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Akathist to the Mother of God in front of the Wonderworking Kursk Root Icon**
Tue. Apr. 13 6 p.m.
- **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
Wed. Apr. 14 8 a.m. Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts
- **Great Canon**
Wed. Apr. 14 6 p.m. Matins with the Great Canon
- **Saturday of the Akathist**
Fri. Apr. 16 6 p.m. Vigil
Sat. Apr. 17 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Fifth Sunday of Great Lent**
Sat. Apr. 17 5 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Apr. 18 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
Wed. Apr. 21 6 p.m. Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts
- **Lazarus Saturday**
Fri. Apr. 23 6 p.m. Vespers and Matins
Sat. Apr. 24 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem — Palm Sunday**
Sat. Apr. 24 5 p.m. Vigil
Sun. Apr. 25 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- **Holy Wednesday**
Wed. Apr. 28 6 p.m. Holy Unction
- **Holy Thursday**
Thur. Apr. 29 8 a.m. Vesperal Divine Liturgy
Thur. Apr. 29 6 p.m. Matins with the Reading of 12 Passion Gospels
- **Holy Friday**
Fri. Apr. 30 9 a.m. Royal Hours
Fri. Apr. 30 4 p.m. Vespers (Shroud is brought out)
Fri. Apr. 30 6 p.m. Matins (with Procession)
- **Holy Saturday**
Sat. May 1 9 a.m. Vesperal Divine Liturgy
Sat. May 1 10 p.m. Reading of the Acts of the Apostles
Sat. May 1 11:30 p.m. Midnight Office
- **Pascha Sunday**
Sun. May 2 Midnight Procession, Matins and Divine Liturgy
Sun. May 2 2 p.m. Paschal Vespers

Kursk Root Icon to Visit St. Basil's

God willing, the wonderworking Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God of the Sign will be visiting our parish during the Fifth Week of

Great Lent. The Akathist will be chanted in front of the ancient wonderworking image on Tuesday, April 13th, at 6:00 P.M. The following day, Wednesday, the 14th, the icon will be in the temple for the morning and evening services.



The Triumph of Orthodoxy celebrates the restoration of icons which occurred as a result of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 843. The first Sunday of Great Lent is set aside for this celebration and children and families were encouraged to bring their icons to Divine Liturgy in order to recreate the same joy and triumph expressed in the festal icon with Empress Theodora and her son Michael along with many other saints reinstating icons back into

Orthodox worship as decided by the ecumenical council.



Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy at St. Basil's



New Catechumens Join St. Basil's



St. Basil's received new catechumens in March. Micah and Rachel Kirn were made catechumens before Divine Liturgy on March 21st. Their sponsors are Deacon Thomas and parishioner Nicole Steineger. Also, Oliver Heath became a catechumen on March 28th and is pictured below with sponsor, Constantine (Doug) Waller. Please keep Micah, Rachel, and Oliver in your prayers as they continue to strive towards becoming a part of the Orthodox Church.



St. Basil's Family Grows

Father Deacon Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth (Florita) Nichols welcomed their first-born son, Basil Gregory, on March 16th. To the left are pictures of Archpriest Sergii saying the Orthodox prayers for the birth of a child on the day of birth in the hospital. Also pictured is the rite of the naming of a child which occurs eight days after birth. The new parents and infant are doing well and look forward to seeing their son grow up in the Church.

Children Playgroups at St. Basil's

There are two children playgroups that take place at St. Basil's throughout the week, one in English and another in Russian. The English playgroup is on Wednesdays at 10:30 am and the Russian playgroup is on

Thursdays at 11:30 am. The playgroups typically last 2 hours and start with a prayer, followed by songs, then a craft, and end with a snack. Parents or caretakers will need to stay to help their child participate. The activities are primarily for children ages 3-5 but younger children are welcome as well. All families with young children are invited to join.

There will be a new section of the newsletter where we explore and learn about the different icons within our church. Historically, icons occupy a very prominent place in Christian worship. When venerating the images of the Most Holy Trinity, Christ, His Most Pure Mother or saints, we manifest our love for God and our reverence for the struggles of the saints. Venerating the holy images we venerate the holy ones depicted on the icons.

As a sign of His mercy to His people, God has blessed our temple with the task of housing the honorable head of the Holy Martyr Irene. It is rather rare that a large fragment of the sanctified body of saints, who glorified God by their martyrlic death in the first centuries of the Church, would be preserved. The honorable head of Martyr Irene is one of such cases.

Saint Irene, along with her sisters Agape and Chione, lived not far from Aquileia in Northern Italy in the end of the 3rd century. Left orphans while still young, the sisters refused offers of marriage and decided to remain virgins and led a pious life. When Emperor Diocletian visited Aquileia he wanted to make the city Christian-free and filled the local prisons with the confessors of the faith. Great Martyr Anastasia, called the Deliverer from Bonds for her ministry to the captives, visited the captured Christians and would encourage and help them. Among those captured were the three virgin sisters who were subjected to diverse tortures. In the church service to the saints it says they did not lose their courage when wild animals were released on them, or when their bodies were cut off piece by piece, or other torments. Agape and Chione were burned alive. When the

fire died out everyone saw the martyrs' bodies untouched by the flames and the virgins looked as if they were asleep.

Saint Irene was made to witness her sisters' martyrdom, but this did not diminish her faith. Then the order came to take her to a brothel. While she was escorted there two soldiers in snow-white garments stopped her guards and told them that a new order was issued for the captive to be taken to a high mountain and left there. When the order was executed and the guards returned they were surprised to find out no one issued the change of the order. Thus two angels preserved the saint from defilement. Soon the soldiers were ordered to hunt down the saint and to kill her, which they did shooting their arrow at her. Deadly wounded, the martyr shouted to the tormentors: "I mock your vain malice, for pure and undefiled I am departing to My Lord Jesus Christ!". Having given thanks to God, she lay down on the ground and yielded her spirit to God on the eve of Pascha in 304 A.D.

The honorable head is kept in a reliquary on the southern side of the nave on a kiot with an icon of the Holy Martyr Irene. The lettering on the icon is in Church Slavonic and translates to "Holy Martyr Irene". Anyone is welcome to venerate it at any time.

A couple of things to note about icons depicting martyrs. Martyrs are shown holding the Cross. This is a simple acknowledgement of Jesus' words: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matthew

St. Basil's Icon Corner

16:24-25). As those who have laid down their lives for Christ's sake, the Holy Martyrs are honored by carrying a cross in their hand. Another common attribute of martyrs in iconography is a red robe, which signifies the spilled blood, the "seed of the Church". The robe may be worn over white clothing, showing Sainthood, green or blue clothing signifying created nature (as is the case in St. Basil's icon of Holy Martyr Irene), or clothing contemporary with the Saint's martyrdom.



Lenten and Pascha Recipes to Share

Below are two recipes that parishioners from St. Basil's would like to share with the expectation that the soup would be useful during the Lenten fasting period and the cheese pascha can be enjoyed on the day of Christ's resurrection.

Mexican Lentil Soup

- 2 tbsp oil
- 2 carrots peeled and diced
- 1/2 onion diced
- 1 lb. lentils
- 10 cups water
- 1 garlic clove finely minced
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro

1. Heat oil in a large stock pot.
2. Saute the carrots for 2 minutes.
3. Add the onions. Cook for 1 minute.
4. Rinse the lentils and add to the pot.
5. Add water, garlic, salt, and bay leaf.
6. Cook for 25 minutes.
7. Add tomato sauce and cilantro.
8. Cook for an additional 10 minutes, or until lentils are soft.
9. Remove and discard the bay leaf.
10. Garnish with cilantro. Serve and enjoy.



Cheese Pascha

- 2 pounds homemade cottage cheese or farmer's cheese
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature, cut into pieces
- 6 large hard-cooked egg yolks, crumbled
- 1 1/2 cups heavy or whipping cream
- 3/4 cups ground almonds
- 1/2 lemon, zest grated
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 large vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 1/2 cup golden raisins

Chopped candied fruits, for decoration

1. In a large bowl, combine the cottage cheese or farmer's cheese, sugar, cream cheese, and egg yolks, stirring to mix.
2. In batches, process the mixture in a food processor, adding an equal amount of cream to each batch, until completely smooth. Transfer back to the bowl.
3. Stir in the ground almonds, lemon zest, lemon extract, and vanilla extract.

4. Line a clean pascha mold, pasotchnitza, with a double layer of rinsed and squeezed-dry cheesecloth. Spoon the cheese mixture into the lined mold, then fold the ends of the cheesecloth neatly over the top. Place a saucer on the cheesecloth, then a 2-pound weight, such as a can, on the saucer. Put the mold in a bowl large enough for the liquid to drain into. Refrigerate for at least 12 hours.
5. Empty the bowl. Unmold the pascha onto a serving plate and carefully remove the cheesecloth. Decorate with candied fruit, pressing some of the fruit into the pascha to form the letters XP, which stands for Khristos voskres ("Christ has risen").



Ask Your Priest

Q: Why does the Orthodox

church celebrate Easter on a day that is typically different than the rest of western christianity? How is the day for Orthodox Easter determined?

A: *The date of Pascha, is determined by a formula established by the First Ecumenical Council convened in the city of Nicea, a suburb of Constantinople, by Emperor St. Constantine in the year 325 AD.*

One of the goals of the Council was to establish unity both dogmatically and liturgically among the Churches. Unity was established around Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Resurrection from the dead—called Pascha. As a token of unity, it was necessary for all to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ—The Feast of Feasts on the same day, thus demonstrating unity among all Christians. Consequently a formula was unanimously agreed on by the 318 Church Fathers attending

the Council. That formula is: To celebrate Pascha on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan (March)—the spring equinox, but after the Jewish Passover. This is the formula used to this very day by the Orthodox Church to determine the date of Pascha.

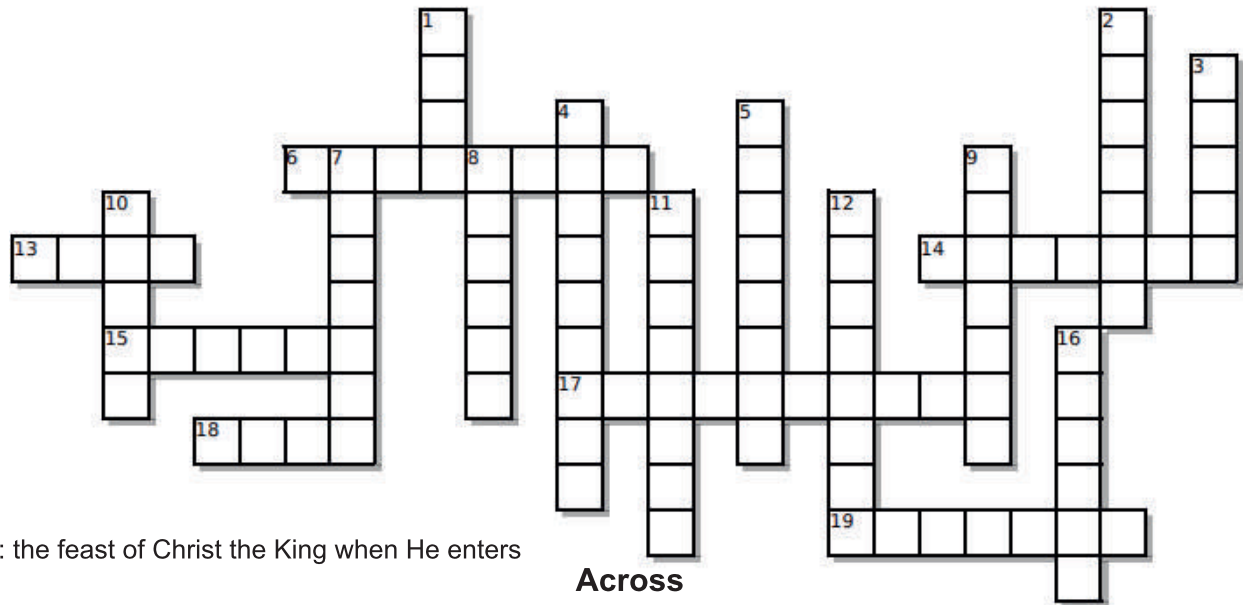
The reason why the date of Pascha differs most years between the East and the West, dates back to 1582 when pope Gregory XIII changed the calendar and ordered its adoption. The decree was rejected by the Orthodox Church, but obediently followed by the Roman Catholic Church and ultimately adopted for secular purposes by most nations and by Protestant churches. With the adoption of the Gregorian Calendar, the date of Easter changed because of the use of the Gregorian rather than the Julian Calendar (Calendar of the First Ecumenical Council) which affected the date of the 14th day of*

Nisan (i.e., The spring equinox). In addition, the Western Church also modified the formula for establishing the date of Pascha by eliminating several of the original criteria. Easter became on the Western Church Calendar "the first Sunday after vernal equinox" (The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1976 Thomas Nelson Inc., Nashville). This further contributed to the difference in the date of Pascha/Easter on the two calendars. The question should be: Why does Western Christianity celebrate Easter on a day that is typically different from the Orthodox Church which originally established the date of Pascha that most Christian Churches followed for 932 years of Christianity?

** For the Orthodox Churches this was a direct canonical violation of a decree of the First Ecumenical Council that neither the Pope nor any other Patriarch had the authority to do.*

- Archpriest Martin

NEWSLETTER ACTIVITY



Down

- 1 ____ Sunday: the feast of Christ the King when He enters Jerusalem
- 2 Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick celebrated on Holy Wednesday
- 3 Length of the Great Fast
- 4 The Sunday of the Last _____
- 5 The Sunday of the _____ Son
- 7 Man raised from the dead by Jesus Christ in Bethany
- 8 Saint who wrote the Great Canon read during the first week in Lent
- 9 Ten ____: parable used in the liturgical texts of Holy Tuesday
- 10 Sunday of the ____ celebrated the third Sunday in Lent
- 11 The Sunday of the _____ and the Pharisee
- 12 Hymn to the Mother of God sung at Matins on the fifth Saturday in Lent
- 16 Patriarch commemorated on Holy Monday for his innocent sufferings

Across

- 6 St. John ____ who wrote The Ladder of Paradise and is celebrated on the fourth Sunday in Lent
- 13 Saint whose life is read during the Great Canon on the fifth week in Lent
- 14 Archbishop of Thessalonica celebrated on the second Sunday in Lent
- 15 Mystical ____: celebrated on Holy Thursday
- 17 Shroud brought out during Vespers on Holy Friday
- 18 Book from the Bible read on Holy Saturday
- 19 ____ of Orthodoxy celebrated on the first Sunday in Lent

March Fill in the Blanks Answer: Prayer of St. Ephraim

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)

Choir Practice

All parishioners are welcome to join the choir. All voices are needed. Choir practice takes place weekly on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm at the church. However, in order to uphold diocesan policy and in keeping with the St. Louis county ordinances issued to restrict Coronavirus spread, the people attending choir practice should practice social distancing.

Parish Prayer List

- Archimandrite Seraphim — Health
- Archpriest Andrei Papkov — Recovery
- Nadia Danett — Health
- Jackie (Xenia) Peck — Health
- Sophia Shipton and family — Health

Keep our parishioners, and those who ask us to pray for them in your prayers this month. Contact Fr. Sergii 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 do not notify clergy of patients, even if you list yourself as a parish member.