

IC XC NIKA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
305 Main Road, Herkimer, New York, 13350 • 315-866-3272
Archpriest John Udics, Rector • e-mail: john.udics@gmail.com
Deacon Demetrios Richards • e-mail: dwr00nhr@twcny.rr.com
Parish Web Page: www.cnyorthodoxchurch.org

Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord!

April 5, 2015	Sunday of the Entrance of Our Lord Into Jerusalem	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
April 8	HOLY WEDNESDAY	Holy Unction	6:00 pm
April 9	HOLY THURSDAY	Vespers and Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
	HOLY THURSDAY	Matins of the Twelve Gospels	6:00 pm
April 10	HOLY FRIDAY	Vespers - Burial Service, Procession	6:00 pm
April 11	HOLY SATURDAY	Vespers and Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	Blessing Baskets 4:00 pm
April 12	HOLY PASCHA	Midnight Service	11:30 pm
	HOLY PASCHA	Matins, Divine Liturgy, Blessing Baskets	midnight
April 12	HOLY PASCHA	Vespers	1:00 pm
April 13	BRIGHT MONDAY	Divine Liturgy [with Procession - Weather permitting]	9:30 am

Saints of the Day: Translation of the relics (1652) of Saint Job, Patriarch of Moscow (1607). Martyrs Reader Theodulus, and Deacon Agathopodes and those with them at Thessalonica (303). New Hieromartyr Priest Alexis (1930). New Hieromartyr Priest Nicholas (1931). Venerable Monk Publius of Egypt (4 c.). Venerable Theonas, Symeon, and Phorbinus of Egypt (4 c.). Venerable Mark the Anchorite of Athens (400). Venerable Abbot Plato of the Studion (813). Venerable Nun Theodora of Thessalonica (892). New Martyr George of New Ephesus (1801). Repose of Saint Philip I, Metropolitan of Moscow (1473). Five girls martyred at Neanidor of Lesbos. Martyrs Theodora and Didymus of Alexandria (305). Martyr Fermus. Saint Becan of Kill-Beggan, Abbot (6 c.). Saint Probus and Saint Grace. New Martyr Argyra at Constantinople (1725). New Martyr Panaghiotis of Jerusalem (1820). Saint Derfel of Lianderfel (5 c.). Venerable Ethelburga, Queen and Abbes of Lyminge, Kent (647). Martyrs Claudius, Diodorus, Victor, Victorinus, Pappia, Serapion, and Nicephorus.

Please remember in your prayers: Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS Yazigi, Bishop YOHANNA Ibrahim, of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, Eugene, Leonid, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Vasil, Vasil. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Mothers Raphaela, Michaela, Catherine, Anna. Monk Victor, Valentina, Dimitri, Nina, Peter, Daniel, Peter, Adam, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Helen, Isaiah, Jamie, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of John Bookout were offered at Liturgy and Moleben March 28 and 29 at the request of Father Justin Mitchell and Family.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Noah Takahashi and Matushka Mary Geza were offered today at Liturgy and Moleben at the request of Father John Udics

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Vera and Nick Keblish were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Nick and Margaret Keblish.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Lisa Welle, Claire Saverino, Archbishop JOHN (Garklavs) and Anna McCartney were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Saturday of Lazarus by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann

The joy that permeates and enlightens the service of Lazarus Saturday stresses one major theme: the forthcoming victory of Christ over Hades. "Hades" is the Biblical term for Death and its universal power, for inescapable darkness that swallows all life and with its shadow poisons the whole world. But now - with Lazarus' resurrection - "death begins to tremble." A decisive duel between Life and Death begins giving us the key to the entire liturgical mystery of Pascha. Already in the fourth century Lazarus' Saturday was called the "announcement of Pascha." For, indeed, it announces and anticipates the wonderful light and peace of the next - The Great - Saturday, the day of life-giving Tomb.

Lazarus, the friend of Jesus, personifies the whole of mankind and also each man, as Bethany - the home of Lazarus, - stands for the whole world - the home of man. For each man was created as a friend of God and was called to this friendship: the knowledge of God, the communion with Him, the sharing of life with Him: "in Him was Life and the Life was the light of men" (John 1:4). And yet this Friend, whom Jesus loves, whom He has created in love, is destroyed, annihilated by a power which God has not created: death. In His own world, the fruit of His love, wisdom and beauty, God encounters a power that destroys His work and annihilates His design. The world is but lamentation and sorrow, complaint and revolt. How is this possible? How did this

happen? These are the questions implied in John's slow and detailed narrative of Jesus' progression towards the grave of His friend. And once there, Jesus wept, says the Gospel (John 11:35). Why did He weep if He knew that moments later He would call Lazarus back to life? Byzantine hymnographers fail to grasp the true meaning of these tears. "As man Thou weepst, and as God Thou raisest the one in the grave..." They arrange the actions of Christ according to His two natures: the Divine and the human. But the Orthodox Church teaches that all the actions of Christ are both Divine and human, are actions of the one and same person, the Incarnate Son of God. He who weeps is not only man but also God, and He who calls Lazarus out of the grave is not God alone but also man. And He weeps because He contemplates the miserable state of the world, created by God, and the miserable state of man, the king of creation... "It stinketh," say the Jews trying to prevent Jesus from approaching the corps, and this "it stinketh" can be applied to the whole of creation. God is Life and He called the man into this Divine reality of life and "he stinketh." At the grave of Lazarus Jesus encounters Death - the power of sin and destruction, of hatred and despair. He meets the enemy of God. And we who follow Him are now introduced into the very heart of this hour of Jesus, the hour, which He so often mentioned. The forthcoming darkness of the Cross, its necessity, its universal meaning, all this is given in the shortest verse of the Gospel - "and Jesus wept."

We understand now that it is because He wept, i.e., loved His friend Lazarus and had pity on him, that He had the power of restoring life to him. The power of Resurrection is not a Divine "power in itself," but the power of love, or rather, love as power. God is Love, and it is love that creates life; it is love that weeps at the grave and it is, therefore, love that restores life... This is the meaning of these Divine tears. They are tears of love and, therefore, in them is the power of life. Love, which is the foundation of life and its source, is at work again recreating, redeeming, restoring the darkened life of man: "Lazarus, come forth!" And this is why Lazarus Saturday is the real beginning of both: the Cross, as the supreme sacrifice of love, and the Common Resurrection, as the ultimate triumph of love.

"Christ - the Joy, Truth, Light and the Life of all and the resurrection of the world, in His love appeared to those on earth and was the image of Resurrection, granting to all Divine forgiveness."

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh: **The Lord's entry into Jerusalem** 30 March 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 by 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 not just remembering, 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.* * *© Estate of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh