



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts
www.stmichaelorthodox.com

April 2024



Fifth Week and Holy Week Schedule

Thursday April 18

6:00 pm – Great Canon of St. Andrew
and Great Compline

Palm Sunday, April 28

9:00 am – Matins

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

7:00 pm - Bridegroom Matins

Great and Holy Monday, April 29:

6:00 pm - Bridegroom Matins

Great and Holy Tuesday, April 30:

6:00 pm - Bridegroom Matins

Great and Holy Wednesday, May 1:

6:00 pm - Holy Unction

8:00 pm - Bridegroom Matins

Great and Holy Thursday, May 2:

10:00 am - Divine Vespertal Liturgy

6:00 pm - Holy Passion Gospel Matins

Great and Holy Friday, May 3:

3:00 pm - Great Vespers

6:00 pm - Lamentations Service

Great and Holy Saturday, May 4:

9:00 am - Vespertal Liturgy 11:00 pm -
Paschal Vigil and Resurrection Service

12:00 am - Paschal Divine Liturgy

Paschal Sunday, May 5:

11:00 am - Agape Vespers

Bright Monday & Bright Tuesday, May 6-7

8:00 am - Matins

Holy Week

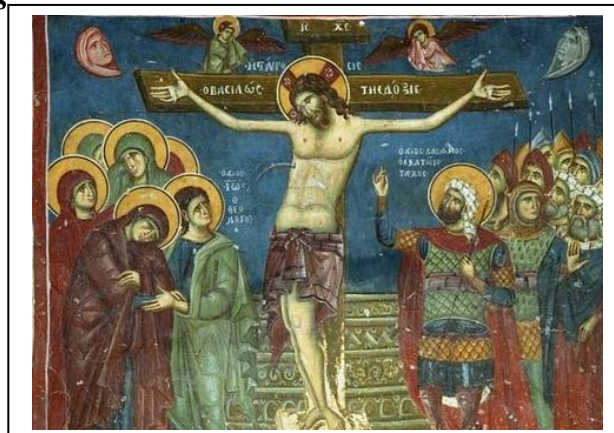
Great Lent and Holy Week are two separate fasts, and two separate celebrations. Great Lent ends on Friday of the sixth week (the day before Lazarus Saturday). Holy Week begins immediately thereafter. Let's explore the meaning of each of the solemn days of Passion Week.

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. Each of these **Bridegroom Orthros** services has a **particular theme**. On **Holy Monday**, the **Blessed Joseph** is commemorated. The **Parable of the Ten Virgins** is read on **Holy Tuesday**. The theme of **Holy Wednesday** is **repentance and forgiveness**.

*Christ is Risen!
Hristos a Inviat!
Christos Anesti!
Hristos Voghrese!
Krishti Unjall!
Cristo a Resucitado!
Al Maseek Qam!*



Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church
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2024 Parish Council Officers

President: Spiro Thomo
Vice President: Joshua Seigler
Secretary: Julian Economou
Treasury: Katie Mironidis

2024 Ladies Society Officers

President: Genevieve Boilard
Vice President: Katie Mironidis
Secretary: Susan Silva
Treasurer: Debbie Thomo

Clergy

Fr. John Downie fr.john_downie71@yahoo.com

Parish News & Events

Happy Birthday!! God Grant You Many More Years!!

April 15th – Anna Tanca

April 17th – Niki Goulas

April 18th – Sophia Pitsillides

April 19th – Jen Zoe Goulas

April 26th – Andrew Silva

April 28th – Julian Economou

April 30th – Christina Kelly

Happy Name Day

April 1st – Mary Grabosky (St. Mary of Egypt)

April 23th – St. Thomas – Tom Dowling, Thomas Burren

April 23rd – George Regan, George Rapsomanikis, George Siotis, George Goulas, Georgia Kritikos

Confession

Examination of conscience, and going to confession is part of preparation for Holy Communion. It is good for us to confess at least 4 times per year before the major feast days, such as Pascha.

Before Confession check the Confession Guide on our webpage and make your sins list. A Life Time Confession is recommended.

Fr. John will be available for Confession by appointment.

Please Pray

for:

Sandra

Mary

Georgia

Henrietta



Pascha Pot Luck

After Lord's Resurrection services we will be having a pot luck in the Hall to feast together. Everyone is welcome.



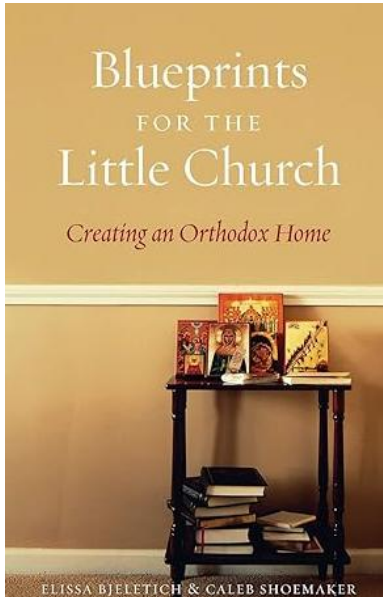
Spring Calendar Raffle

First Fundraising Event of 2024
Contact Sandra Nasto or Mary Dowling for the forms. 1 calendar - \$10
3 for \$25

**Zoom Bible Study – April 4th, 2024-
7:00pm**

Book Corner

Book: *Blueprints for the Little Church – Creating an Orthodox Home*

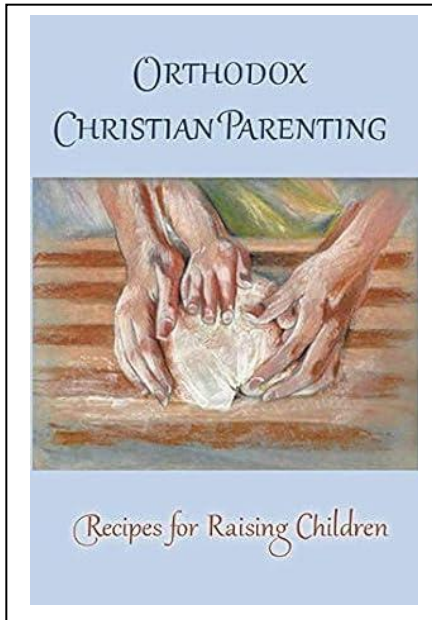


How do we as Orthodox parents keep our children in the Church throughout their lives? It all begins with involving them in the life of the Church from birth onward—in the parish and also at home. *Blueprints for the Little Church* provides practical ideas and encouragement—without judgment—for incorporating the primary practices of Orthodox spirituality into your family life at every stage of its growth and throughout the church year.

Elissa Bjeletich is a wife and mother, raising five daughters and working in the Sunday school at Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Austin, Texas. She converted to Orthodoxy in 1999 and now writes and speaks primarily on parenting and Christian education. Elissa's Ancient Faith podcast, *Raising Saints: Educating Our Youth in the Orthodox Faith, Both at Home and in the Parish*, encourages and equips us for the important conversations through which we pass on the faith to our young people.

Caleb Shoemaker is the father of four children. A graduate of Gordon College with a BA in Youth Ministries and an MA in Biblical Languages from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Caleb has worked in church and para-church ministry for seventeen years. He and his wife Emily converted to Orthodoxy in 2012.

Book: *Orthodox Christian Parenting – Recipes for Raising Children*



Gardeners know that in order for a tree to be healthy and develop strong roots, it must be watered deeply and fed well while young. Later, when the inevitable storms come, the strong roots will be deep enough to prevent the tree from blowing over. If the roots are shallow, the tree will be lost. In the sacrament of holy marriage we hear: Your children will be like olive shoots around your table (Psalm 128:3). A verdant and fruit-bearing olive tree requires cultivation, and all the more does the raising of our children. If we teach them all we can about their faith as early as possible, giving them spiritual roots that are strong and run deep, then when they face the world their faith will not blow away like seedlings in a storm. This book is especially designed for busy Orthodox Christian parents. It is the fruit of the labors of many pooled resources: Scripture, holy fathers, clergy, clergy families, monastics, and Orthodox parents. In the end, our children are the fruit of God's grace and our labors. If we spiritually tend to them in their youth, we will have nurtured their potential to grow into amazing, faithful, fruitful, even holy Orthodox Christians. Let us work diligently when they are young and the harvest will be plentiful.

Summary of the *Women and Open Retreat* with quest speaker Mother Gabriela, Holy Dormition Monastery, MI, March 29th-31st, 2024

The event recording will be available on our website by the end of next week

Holy Archangel Michael Church's Lady Society had again the joy to welcome Mother Gabriela Ursache as a guest speaker for our Women and Open retreat. This event was another successful retreat with a participation of about 90 attendees.



Because last year many women expressed their desires for their entire family to meet Mother Gabriela, this year we structured our event in a such a way to assure everyone participation to Mother Gabriela's lectures.

Friday night, March 29th was dedicated for **women only**. The lecture: *The image of the Mother of God in the church and family* brought women attention.

As usual the **Question & Answers session** was considered the most interesting part of the lecture because the opportunity to ask practical questions for the spiritual life.

Friday, during the Women Retreat we considered the best opportunity to **announce and congratulate one of the winner of AROLA's Mother of Year prizes**, Sophia Pitsillides. Sophia is a Deputy Principle of a school in Auburn, she is a wife, mother of five beautiful children, and a pious Orthodox believer (a convert). The diploma and the present (3 very inspired books in English about raising the children) send to our parish by AROLA through the love and effort of Mrs. Mirela Manga, were handed over to Sophia during the retreat. Tears and joy were mixing together!



From the first lecture we would like to share with our readers some of the most important idea Mother Gabriela brought forth to the public attention.

- The Holy Mother is the icon of the perfect unity between man and God. She is a model both for women, and for men. In the Holy Mother we understand the women's priesthood: to bear children. The fruits of the womb are the women's priesthood.
- Jesus Christ interacted with women. He spoke to women, allowed them to ask questions. Jesus had female disciple too.
- Virtues of Holy Mother urge us to follow Her model in our life
- Martha is the symbol of the services to the Lord and Maria is the symbol of discipleship. Martha knew the Scripture and she confessed that Jesus was God: 'Yes ,Lord I know that you will resurrect.....' Maria stayed at the feet of our Lord listening to His teaching. Martha and Maria as sisters represent also the services to our neighbors.
- God poured the gift of prophesy upon both men, and women, young and old.
- The grace of the Holy Spirit is given to each of us according to the measure of God's gift. We are all called to grow spiritually and to attain the maturity of the manhood, the fullness of God.
- The women principal role in the family is to nurture the souls of all members of the family, to maintain discipline, the good order of the house.
- We women should improve our spiritual life in order to be example for the entire family, we help the family and model our children
- Marriage is the image of Christ 's unity with the church
- Unity of the marriage is not only in body but also in the soul
- The spouses should uphold each other. One has some gifts, the other one other gifts. They complete each other
- Women are the priests of the family. They set up an icon corner, they are taking care of the children daily prayers and the men are the provider. If the mother has a special relationship with Holy Mother she is bringing that relationship into the family, to her children.
- The wife and the husband should be obedient to each other
- Discipline and teach the kids when they are young. When we pray to our Lord and especially to Holy Mother we are too busy or impatient to hear her answer. We have to have patience to listen to her answer and give thanks to everything, even giving thanks for not giving us what we were praying for. When we ask her something in prayer we already have our expectation about what the answer should be.
- All strengths stay in humility because pride is fragile
- God became incarnate to make us new people, not better people
- The hearts of the mother and the child (in the womb) have the same rhythm, and it is also an example of the perfect union between Holy Mother and God.
- Holy Mother is the prototype of the virgin (monastic) and mothers. Virginity is not only physical but it also means the guarding of our senses
- When we do not appreciate the gift, we do not appreciate the giver. When people do not respect and revere the mysteries of the church, they do not respect and revere God, the Giver.
- Preserving the virginity before marriage is beautiful, and it is a virtue. The union between man and women is blessed by God only in the marriage. Abstinence is hard especially at young age, but it is beautiful. If we fall there is repentance, and we can anytime change when we realize that we did something wrong. We never know when our end will come, so do not postpone your confession.

-When we grow spiritually and mature spiritually we can go back to confession and make a **life time confession**. Fr. Roman did life time confession several times before he died. When you remember something you did not confess yet, go to confess that sin.

Friday we finish our day by community prayer: the Evening prayer. The prayers were conducted by Fr. John and Mother Gabriella.

Saturday, March 30th we started the day with the participation to the Divine Liturgy followed by Memorial services. Our cantors welcomed the guest cantors who together offered a very nice, spiritual byzantine chanting, both for Divine Liturgy and Vespers.

Saturday retreat was an **Open Retreat** allowing participation of **men and children along with the women**.

The second lecture: "Home as church - Prayer as the door to Joy"

Some ideas from the second lecture:

- To be a spiritual person means to be filled with the Holy Spirit
- To be mature in Christ is opposite to jealousy, envy, to have your own will, anger, not forgiving, etc
- Without communal prayer is not a spiritual family
- If we do not establish a family prayer rule before we have children afterwards will be very difficult to have a family prayer rule
- There are some rules for the prayer:
- We stay in front of the icons and we read the prayers from the books



- When we are used to these kind of prayers we move to the next level: the mental prayer, and to the stillness and peacefulness
- Then our attention goes to the heart and warm it, and then we become humble
- A family who does not pray together, does not stay together (they scattered)
- The discipline of prayer is very important. We should say the Morning Prayer and the Evening prayer every day. During difficult time we can add more prayers, we can also add more prayers during joy time
 - If we show a superficial attitude towards God and prayer, this is very damaging for the children
 - We have to prepare our children how to face the world, the temptations; how to keep their faith in an unbelieving world. To teach them to resist the world and not to imitate it, and to not compromise
- St. Basil the Great said in the Homily for the youth that he who does not have the work discipline does not have the prayer discipline
- The conscious is the voice of God in us
- We should pray: God, the Holy Spirit speak to me, to be your word, your will not mine



After lunch, the third lecture: “Climbing the Ladder of the Virtues”

Important ideas:

- Our soul is the soil where we cultivate the virtues. What we sow, it is what we harvest
- Love of the world comes from the love of our body but Love of God comes from love of the spirit
- There are moral virtues (kindness, joy, peace, faithfulness, courage, moral justice, etc), and spiritual virtues; (humility, freedom from pride, prayer, longing for the kingdom of God, etc) and theological virtues (faith, hope charity).
- Vices: laziness; ignorance; jealousy; self love, forgetfulness, love of material things, greediness, avarice, gluttony, anger, self-esteem/vanity, etc
- Avarice is the root of many evil
- We oppose gluttony with abstinence. Cut down the portion
- We oppose avarice with compassion for the poor; anger by good will; self-esteem/vanity by doing good deeds in secret. Pride by non judging or despise others; anger by humility
- What’s anger good for? We should be angry just not to sin, against the demon but not to be anger because other people do not do our will, or because they are not as I would like for them to be
- If you are fighting against the avarice you have to detach yourself from the material things; see what you can renounce. The avarice comes from the fear we do not have enough, and this is why we do not share with others. If we are able to surpass this fear we will see that the more we give, the more we get. Being responsible is good but keeping everything God gave us is bad.
- Everything we have is from God and it should return to God by giving alms, and supporting the church
- We will not be free of passions if we do not practice the virtues
- Virtues should be cultivated in our souls; we do this when we chose to do good, to be better
- Prayer is a virtue; the souls is eager to be with God
- There are 3 stages of spiritual life:
 - Slave – obey because of the fear of God
 - Servant – obey seeking for rewards
 - Sons and daughters of God – love motivates obedience

After the two lectures and Questions and Answers session the day ended by attending the Vespers

Sunday, March 31st after Matins and Divine Liturgy mother Gabriela had the last lecture about *Monastic life and living as an Orthodox Christian in a present time.*



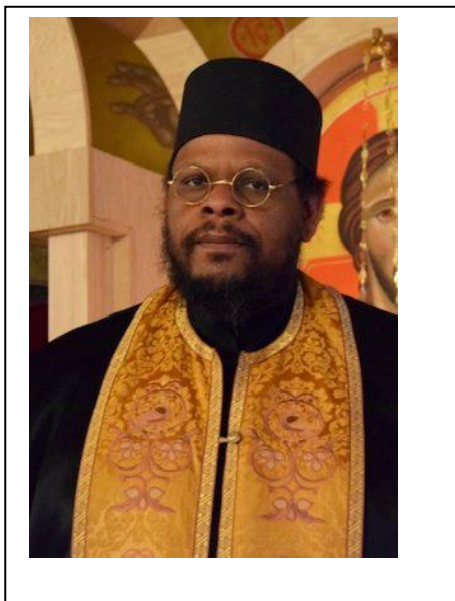
Young Adults Retreat - May 31 and All People Retreat - June 1-2

Quest Speaker: Fr. Turbo Qualls

Fr. Turbo Qualls is the rector at St. Mary of Egypt, Serbian Orthodox Church in Kansas City Missouri, where he lives with his wife Juliana and their 8 children.

Fr. Turbo is also a **retired professional tattoo artist**. Having **studied iconography** within the Prosoptone **school of Iconography** and most notably under the contemporary **master iconographer, Fr. Stamatis Skliris of Athens**, Fr. Turbo further augmented his education and skill in iconography by completing the Antiochian House of studies course in theology, with an emphasis in Iconology.

Fr. Turbo is also the former **Dean of Chapters** for the national chapter of the **Brotherhood of St. Moses the Black**. He has lectured in various parts of the United States in regard to the work of evangelization and cultural outreach within the United States. **As a former youth minister within the evangelical church, Fr. Turbo** has dedicated much of his life and work **to the pragmatic and tangible articulation of Orthodox spirituality to both young people and spiritual seekers.**



The Sacrament of the Holy Unction - explanation

The meaning and purpose

“Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” (James 5:14–15)

The first Scriptural reading for the service of **Holy Unction** shows that this **Sacrament has a twofold purpose: bodily healing and the forgiveness of sins**. The two are joined, for man is a unity of body and soul. There can be no sharp distinction between bodily and spiritual sicknesses. Of course, the Church does not believe that this anointing is automatically followed by recovery of health, for God’s will – and not man’s – prevails in all instances. Sometimes, the sick person is healed and recovers after receiving the Sacrament; but in other cases, he does not recover physically. Nonetheless, the Sacrament gives him the spiritual strength to prepare for death and life in the Kingdom to come.

The first portion of the service features a canon in which we sing to God, beseeching Him for his healing and protection, and for our remission of sins. Later, we sing troparions to saints including James, Demetrios and Nicholas, who are famed for healing with the power of God.

At the end, the priests hold the open Gospel Book over the heads of those receiving Holy Unction, during which the senior priest reads the Absolution Prayer: “I lay not my sinful hand upon the heads of those who approach thee in sins, and entreat of thee, through us, remission of their sins, but thy strong and mighty hand which is in this Holy Gospel which I hold upon the heads of these thy servants.” This commemorates the ancient practice of laying-on of hands for healing.

Where is the service of the Holy Unction held?

In the church or in the home of the sick person for whom Holy Unction is made.

Who can perform the service of Holy Unction?

The Sacrament is formally performed by seven priests, reflecting an ancient practice of performing the service over the course of seven days, each day having its own prayers. However, it is now performed oftentimes by just one priest in one service that includes seven epistle readings, seven gospel readings and seven prayers over the oil for our repentance and anointing. We hear these in the second half of the service.

When can Holy Unction be made? Is for the healthy people too?

This sacrament is offered on Holy Wednesday night, in the remembrance of the Anointing of the Savior with myrrh by the sinful woman (Luke 7, 37-38), but it can be offered year-round (especially on fasting days). The Holy Unction is not only for those on their deathbed, but for anyone who is sick or even over the physically healthy. **Holy Unction does not replace the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) and, like Holy Communion, it can only be offered to Orthodox Christians**. The patient for whom Holy Unction is performed must first go to confession, in order to fully benefit, body and soul, by this wonderful mystery.

What do we need to know about the oil from Holy Unction?

Being blessed by priests with the call of God, this oil is sanctified and filled with the divine gift of the Holy Spirit, like the water of Baptism. He has the power to sanctify the soul and heal the body, drive away diseases, heal wounds, cleanse the taint of sin and share God's mercy and grace.

That is why **the oil left over from Holy Unction must be kept with honor in a chosen place**. It can only be used for pure and pious purposes. It is customary to make a pastry from the flour and oil from Holy Unction, which is given to the sick person to eat. The oil can be put in the candle, either at home or at the church.

The Russian churches have different rules regarding the Holy unction oil - unlike holy oil from in front of an icon or at a shrine, laypersons cannot take Holy Unction to their homes.

The Great Thursday, Friday and Saturday services - explanation

HOLY AND GREAT THURSDAY

On this day the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great is celebrated together with Vespers.

The readings and hymns of Matins dwell on Judas' betrayal, on 'the dark night' which settled in his soul. We pray that we may keep ourselves from greed and deceit, and be made pure by partaking of the holy Mysteries of Christ's Body and Blood. The *Troparion* after the 'Alleluia' at Matins speaks of this:

The whole narration of our Lord's Passion is given at the Matins of Holy and Great Thursday. **It is commonly called 'the Service of the Twelve Gospels.'** A tall Crucifix usually stands in the middle of the church with many candles lighted round it. After the Six Psalms and the Great Litany, the choir chants, 'Alleluia' and the Troparion of Holy and Great Thursday. The priest and deacon come out of the sanctuary carrying the Book of Gospels. It is placed on a podium and the priest begins the reading. The whole story of the Passion is read from the four evangelists and is divided into twelve parts. It begins with the 'Gospel of the Testament' and the prayer at the Mystical Supper, in Saint John's Gospel, and continues through the four Gospels to the burial of Christ by Joseph of Arimathea. After each reading the choir chants, 'Glory to Thy forbearance, O Lord, glory to Thee.' Between the readings special antiphons and hymns are chanted. They speak of Judas' betrayal; of the cruelty of the Jews; of our Saviour's infinite patience and meekness; of the awe of all creation when the Lord of all was nailed to the Cross between two thieves. All recount the Passion and foretell the glory of the Resurrection.

Matins ends shortly after the twelfth Gospel.

HOLY AND GREAT FRIDAY

Great Friday is the most solemn day of Holy Week. In awe and trembling, we stand before the Cross on which our Saviour died and we see the image of Him dead, lying in our midst, on the Epitaphios (the Winding Sheet).

During the Service of Matins, which by anticipation is chanted on Thursday evening, we will hear some of the most awe-inspiring hymns of the ecclesiastical year. The following is but a one example:

Today there is hung upon the Tree, He that suspended the earth upon the waters. A crown of thorns is placed upon Him Who is the King of the Angels. With false purple is He wrapped about, He that wrappeth the Heavens with clouds. Buffetings did He receive, Who freed Adam in the Jordan. With nails was He affixed, He that is the Bridegroom of the Church. With a lance was He pierced, He that is the Son of the Virgin. We venerate Thy Passion, O Christ. Show also unto us Thy glorious Resurrection.

The solemn Vespers of Great Friday is celebrated in the afternoon at the time of our Lord Jesus' death. Again all the readings remind us of the suffering Christ and His glory. After the entrance, lessons are read in which the Prophet Isaih speaks of 'the Lamb led to the slaughter,' and an Epistle of Saint Paul on the power and wisdom of the Cross; again a Gospel is read describing our Lord's trial before Pilate, His Crucifixion and burial.

Holy and Great Saturday is a reverent vigil at the tomb of the Son of God, slain for our sins. By anticipation, the Saturday Matins is held on Friday evening.

After the Six Psalms and the Great Litany, the Royal Doors are opened clergy come out with candles and censer. The choir sings ‘The Lord is God and hath appeared unto us,’ and then the appointed *troparia*.

In the meantime, the priest and deacon cense the Shroud, then stand in front of it. The priest and the choir then chant the ‘**Lamentations**’. It is like a long poem depicting the Angels in Heaven and all creatures on earth overwhelmed by the death of their Creator, and their gratitude at being freed from death’s power by Christ.

After the Lamentations, the Resurrection hymns are sung. Then, following the customary litanies, the choir chants the canon, where the note of joy and triumph is heard more and more clearly. At the end of the Great Doxology of Matins, the priest raises the Shroud, which is then taken by four pall-bearers, the deacon walks in front, the people follow, all carrying candles, accompanied by the choir chanting, ‘Holy God, Holy and Strong, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us.’ This represents the burial of Christ. Then, the *prokeimenon* is chanted, and the glorious prophecy of Ezekiel is read about the dry bones of Israel, out of which arose ‘an exceeding great host’ quickened to life by the breath of God. Then follows Saint Paul’s Epistle about Christ our Passover, and the Gospel about the sealing of Jesus’ tomb. Matins then ends as usual.

HOLY GREAT SATURDAY MORNING

The Liturgy of Holy and Great Saturday is that of Saint Basil the Great, it is also known as the First Resurrection because it is the time when the Holy Light is coming in the church of Jerusalem. It begins with Vespers. Then the Old Testament readings are recited. They tell of the most striking events and prophecies of the salvation of

mankind by the death of the Son of God. The account of creation in Genesis is the first reading. The sixth reading is the story of Israel’s crossing of the Red Sea and Moses’ song of victory – over Pharaoh, with its refrain: ‘For gloriously is He glorified’. The last reading is about the Three Children in the fiery furnace of Babylon, and their song of praise with its repeated refrain: ‘O praise ye the Lord and supremely exalt Him unto the ages.’ In the ancient church the catechumens were baptized during the time of these readings. The Epistle which follows speaks of how, through the death of Christ, we too shall rise to a new life. After the Epistle, the choir chants, like a call to the sleeping Christ: ‘Arise, O Lord, Judge the earth, for Thou shalt have an inheritance among all the nations... The deacon carries out the Book of the Gospels, and reads the first message of the resurrection from Saint Matthew. Because the Vespers portion of the service belongs to the next day (Pascha) the burial hymns of Saturday are mingled with those of the resurrection, so that this service is already full of the coming Paschal joy.

After the Gospel the Liturgy proceeds as usual. Instead of the Cherubic Hymn, a special Great Entrance Hymn is chanted:

Let all mortal flesh keep silence and stand with fear and trembling, and take no thought for any earthly thing, for the King of kings and Lord of lords cometh to be slain and given as food for the faithful. Before Him go the choirs of the angels with all sovereignty and power: the many-eyed Cherubim and six-winged Seraphim, covering their faces and crying out the hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Translated from Romanian; Synaxarion of the Lenten Triodion and Pentecostarion, pp. 163-166 (Rives Junction, Mi.: HDM Press, 1999).

PASCHA **OPEN HOUSE** *Party*



Christ is Risen!

Hristos a inivat!

Christos Anesti!



We welcome the community of St. Michael's Church to join us at the Parish House for the 1st Annual Pascha Open House!

This is a potluck event, so please make your favorite ready-to-serve Pascha dish or meat to throw on the grill to break the fast together.

We will enjoy yard games, kids' eggs hunt, sitting around the fire, and camaraderie and fellowship for all ages.

SUNDAY, MAY 5th, 2024 at 12:00pm, after the Second Resurrection Services

RSVP: Presbytera Camelia cell or e-mail by April 27th

OTHER CHURCHES RETREATS



SAT. APRIL 6, 2024
10AM-4:30PM

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Hail beauty & boast of women

LED BY VERY REV. FR. PATRICK TISHEL AND
FR. TEODOR ANASTASOAI

- \$35 PER PERSON & \$20 FOR STUDENTS & SENIORS
- SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE
- PLEASE REGISTER BY MARCH 30TH
- REGISTER AT
[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/MJS3DKHW154DV3VB7](https://forms.gle/MJS3DKHW154DV3VB7)
OR EMAIL ALINA DIRECTLY AT
ALINA.OPREA@GMAIL.COM

- 9:30AM: REGISTRATION & COFFEE/TEA
- 10AM: AKATHIST TO THE MOTHER OF GOD
- 10:30AM: 1ST TALK "ON THE MOTHER OF GOD" & ACTIVITIES
- 12:30PM: LUNCH & BOOKSTORE WILL BE OPEN
- 1:30PM: 2ND TALK "THE ONE THING NEEDFULL" & ACTIVITIES
- 3:15PM: AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS
- 4:00PM: CLOSING REMARKS

SPIRITUAL RETREAT AT ST. NICHOLAR ROMANIAN CHURCH , SHREWSBURY- "PAPA" EPHRAIM OF ALASKA † REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION † THE UNKNOWN VIRTUES

Hieromonk "Papa" Ephraim was born in 1970 in Boston. He converted to Orthodoxy when he was 18. After graduating with a degree in Mechanical Engineering from MIT, he went to Mount Athos. He became a monk there at Philotheou Monastery on Mount Athos in 1994. In 1995 Elder Ephraim asked him and 4 other monks to come to Arizona in order to help him establish St. Anthony's Monastery. The same year Elder Ephraim selected Papa Ephraim to be his personal cell-attendant, which he was until 2017. In 1998 he was ordained to the diaconate, and the following year he became a priest and began hearing confessions. At St. Anthony's Monastery, Papa Ephraim was the choir director and taught the other monks and novices Byzantine chant, as well as Modern and Ancient Greek. He also translated and published several books on the spiritual life, including Monastic Wisdom, Counsels from the Holy Mountain, and My Elder Joseph the Hesychast. He also composed several thousand pages of Byzantine chant in English, in both staff and Byzantine notation. In order to minister better to the needs of the many Romanian pilgrims, he learned Romanian in 2015. In 2018, Elder Ephraim gave him his blessing to continue his monastic life at St. Nilus Skete in Alaska. There he was the chaplain and spiritual father of the nuns living on that remote island. He also published a book on the spiritual life of monastics entitled The Angelic Life. In 2019, Papa Ephraim accompanied Fr. Athanasius Kone on two missionary trips to India, where they baptized 350 people. In 2023, he relocated to Chicago in order to serve at the Monastery Dependency of Sts. Athanasios and John, where he currently lives.



April 2024

Saint Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church

Southbridge, Massachusetts

www.stmichaelorthodox.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 + Strict Fast	2 + Strict Fast	3 + Strict Fast Presanctified Liturgy 6:00pm – Albanian Church	4 + Strict Fast Zoom Bible Study 7:00pm	5 + Strict Fast	6 + Fast Day Divine Liturgy and Memorial 9:00am Vespers 5:00pm
7 + Fast Day Sunday of Holy Cross Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Bridegroom Matins 7:00pm	8 + Strict Fast	9 + Strict Fast	10 + Strict Fast Presanctified Liturgy 6:00pm – St. Michael Church	11 + Strict Fast	12 + Strict Fast	13 + Fast Day – Wine and oil allowed Saturday of Lazarus Divine Liturgy/9:00am Memorial Service Vespers 5:00pm
14 + Fast Day Sunday of St. John Climacus Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	15 + Strict Fast	16 + Strict Fast	17 + Strict Fast Presanctified Liturgy 6:00pm – Albanian Church	18 + Strict Fast The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and the Great Compline 6:00pm	19 + Strict Fast	20 + Fast Day Divine Liturgy and Memorial 9:00am Vespers 5:00pm
21+ Fast Day Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	22 + Strict Fast	23 + Strict Fast	24 + Strict Fast Presanctified Liturgy 6:00pm – St. Michael Church	25 + Strict Fast	26 + Strict Fast	27 + Fast Day – wine and oil allowed Saturday of Lazarus Divine Liturgy- 9:00am and Memorial Vespers 5:00pm
28 Palm Sunday + Fast Day –Fish allowed Matins 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Bridegroom Matins 7:00pm	29+ Strict Fast Great and Holy Monday Bridegroom Matins 6:00pm	30+ Strict Fast Great and Holy Tuesday Bridegroom Matins 6:00pm	1 May + Strict Fast Great and Holy Wednesday Holy Unction 6:00pm Bridegroom Matins 8:00pm	2 May + Strict Fast Great and Holy Thursday Divine Vesperal Liturgy (St. Basil the Great w/ Vespers) 10:00am Holy Passion Gospel Matins 6:00pm	3 May+ Strict Fast Great and Holy Friday Epihaphion12:00 Great Vespers 3:00pm Lamentations Service 6:00pm	4+ Fast Day – Wine and oil allowed Great and Holy Saturday 10:00am Divine Liturgy Resurrection Service 11:00pm Paschal Divine Liturgy 12:00am
5 May Great and Holy Pascha Agape Vespers 11:00am 10:00am	6 May Bright Monday Matins 8:00am Divine Liturgy 9:00am	7 MayBright Tuesday Divine Liturgy 4:00am??	8 May Bright Wednesday	9 May Bright Thursday Vespers, Litia and Matins 6:00pm	10 May Bright Friday Life-Giving Fount of the Mother of God Divine Liturgy 10:00am	11 May Bright Saturday Vespers 5:00pm