

The Protomartyr Newsletter

A monthly publication of St. Stephen Orthodox Cathedral

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Stephen Cathedral,

We are now in the middle of Lent celebrating the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and bowing ourselves before our Crucified Savior. The image of the Cross is central for us Christians because it reminds us that "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish, but have eternal life." (*John 3:16*) We take so many things for granted in our lives: the world in which we live, the abundance of good things God bestows on us though we are not worthy of them, even our very breath, which is the gift of God's Spirit. But how often do we reflect on the beauty of this creation and on our lives, thanking God for these great gifts? And the good news of Christianity is that, even beyond life in this world, we have life eternal prepared for those who choose to live with God. Yet part of this Gospel news is that, in order for us to have eternal life, the Son of God had to suffer on the Cross and die so that we could live. There was no other way to save us.



Our willingness to encounter and overcome difficulties in fulfilling the will of God is a measure of our true love. And so, the centrality of the image of the Cross in our lives challenges us to respond to God's love with our love that is ready for sacrifice as well. Our sacrifice for God is incomparable with the sacrifice that God made for us, but if we think we can love God without any difficulty on our part, we are deceiving ourselves.

This is exactly what is happening with many of those who say that they believe in God and love Him, yet do not want to be part of an "organized religion". The word "religion" comes from the Latin *religare*, which means "to bind" in the sense that people who follow a religious path are bound by their promise to follow a certain prescribed set of rules. However, with many people the word "religion" carries with it bad or erroneous connotations. These connotations can be true, but only if these prescribed rules are man-made and not inspired by the Holy Spirit. Yet when God speaks to us He gives us certain sets of rules: "Do not kill"; "Do not steal"; "Do not commit adultery", and so on. And, yes, one of them is "work six days and dedicate one day to the Lord."

Those who refuse a religious way of life do it precisely because they do not want to make any sacrifice in overcoming themselves and conforming to the image that God sets before us in His revelation. That is why the season of Great Lent was from ancient times a proven way to offer a concrete sacrifice to God by changing our diet and making efforts in our prayer life and in our attentiveness to God and to others. This time is fittingly concluded with Holy Week when the Church calls us for one last sacrifice: to be with the Lord as He is going to His voluntary suffering and death. He asked His beloved disciples to "watch and pray" with Him in the garden of Gethsemane (*Matt 26:41*). We are given the same opportunity every year when we come to this most special season. Let us not be indifferent to the sufferings of our Lord, but, rather, let us eagerly come to Him, standing by His side as we await for Him to conquer death and hell by His glorious Resurrection.

May the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified for us and rose from the dead, be upon you!

With love in Christ,

Fr. Victor

In this Issue:

Letter from Father Victor

Iconostas Project

Punctuality

February Financial Report

Life of the Parish

Etiquette

April Calendar

Prayers

Meditations on the Divine Liturgy

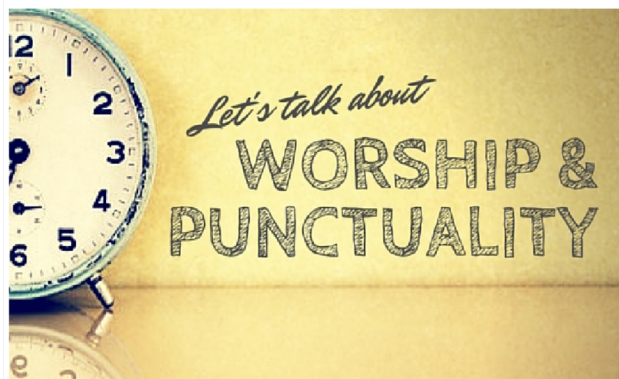
ICONOSTAS PROJECT



The Iconostas Project in the main church continues - Thanks be to God, and to the generosity of our parishioners who have pledged to sponsor this project! We are still on-target with our goal of two new icons every 30-45 days. We continue to pray for project completion by the summer months, after which we will schedule a special service of blessing of the Iconostas.

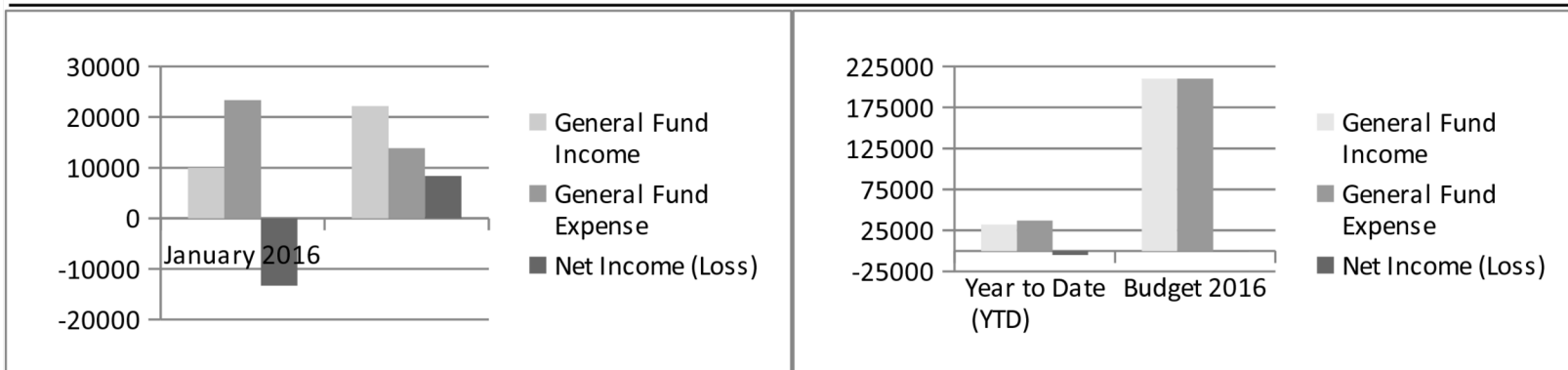


PUNCTUALITY



The Sunday Divine Liturgy, celebrated in the Main Cathedral, **begins at 10:00AM.** It does not begin at 10:10, 10:15, or even 10:25. If your weekday job begins at 8:30, it is very likely that you make every effort to be there on time! Settling into a pew 15 or 20 minutes after the Liturgy has begun is both disrespectful to God, and to your brothers and sisters who have arrived on time. **Please!** Make every effort to get out the door in a timely manner on Sunday mornings (*set your alarm clock a few minutes earlier, lay out your clothes the night before, etc.*), so that you can be present to hear that most-important exclamation, "Blessed is the Kingdom, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...".

FEBRUARY FINANCIAL REPORT



For the month of February 2016, General Fund Income was \$22,168 and General Fund Expenses were \$13,818; a net gain of \$8,350. For the first two months of 2016, General Fund Income was \$32,148 and General Fund Expenses were \$37,131, a net loss of (\$4,982). Please continue your financial stewardship so that we can comfortably meet our expenses every month.

THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH

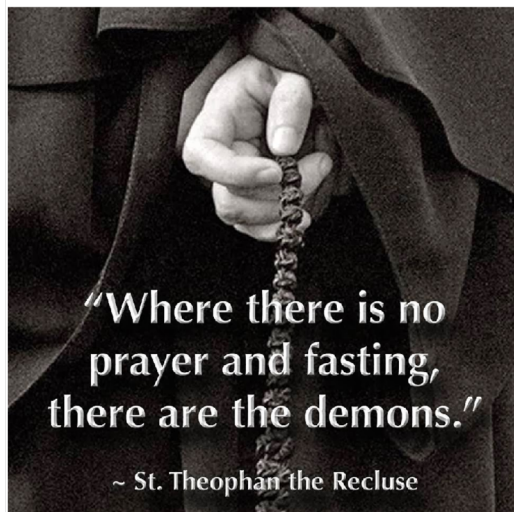


Pussy-Willow Alert!

We NEED pussy-willows! With the warmer than usual winter and the early spring, it looks very probable that some pussy-willow trees might start budding. Since we use these branches for Palm Sunday, PLEASE, if you have access to these trees, cut some of the budding branches and bringing them to church. Once they are cut, we can store them until Palm Sunday for the blessing. Your help is needed and greatly appreciated!

Pot-luck Meal following Presanctified Liturgy

As has been our custom, a pot-luck meal follows Presanctified Liturgy, for all those in attendance. Please join us after the service for fellowship, and consider bringing a Lenten covered-dish to share.



April Charity

The April Charity Collection has been designated for the **Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America (S.O.C.A.)**. The S.O.C.A. traces its roots to the previous Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS) which had been inactive for several years. The purpose of S.O.C.A. is not to fund the day to day operating expenses of the Orthodox Church in America, but rather to fund the longer term mission and vision of the Church as expressed by his Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON in his Four Pillars of the Church: Spiritual Life, Stewardship, Evangelism, and Outreach. Contributions to the S.O.C.A. will help to fund new mission parishes, seminaries, Christian service and humanitarian aid, communications and outreach, liturgical music, Christian education and church camps, youth, young adult and campus ministries, and military and hospital chaplains. Please be generous to help the Orthodox Church in America expand its mission. **During the month of April you will also find a 2016 S.O.C.A. Pledge and Gift Form in your weekly bulletin.** If you are interested in making a further commitment to the Orthodox Church in America, please consider becoming a pledging or contributing member of S.O.C.A.

Made-with-Love Babkas

Orders for home-made Babka are being taken **until Sunday April 17**. The delectable flavor choices include cheese, raspberry, apricot, and cinnamon - all for the low, low cost of **\$13.00 per babka!** This year, all babkas must be *pre-ordered* and *pre-paid* as **none will be sold at the Bake Sale!** Please see **Connie Skvir** to place your order. All orders will be available for pick up on Palm Sunday, following Divine Liturgy.

Palm Sunday Bake Sale

The Baked Goods Committee asks your help to make our annual bake sale another success. **We need ethnic pastries, cakes, pies, cookies, Easter treats etc.** Please consider making a baked good or a monetary donation if you don't bake. As usual, we greatly appreciate your efforts in helping our Parish!

What's-in-Your-Closet?

Fund Raising Collection Drive

There will be a fund raising event/collection drive on **Saturday, April 23 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**. Please consider going through your closets and donating your unwanted clothing, linens, housewares, shoes, belts, handbags, books, CDs, DVDs, electronics (*no TVs or computer monitors please - unless flat screen*). The church will receive funds for every pound collected and the items will be donated to **Impact Thrift Stores**, a non-profit organization. If you are unable to drop off your donations on the specified day and time, please feel free to bring them to the church in advance. Please see **Martha Sisko** for additional information. Thank you for supporting the parish.

THE LIFE OF OUR PARISH (CONT'D)

Take Me Out to the Ballgame



St. Stephen's OCF is organizing an outing to Citizens Bank Park to watch the **Philadelphia Phillies** take on the Milwaukee Brewers on **Friday, June 3 at 7:05PM**. Admission tickets are **\$34**. If you are interested in an evening of baseball, and fellowship, please **fill in your name on the sign-up sheet** hanging on the bulletin board "*...for it's one, two, three strikes, you're out, at the old ball game!*"

Alaska Lecture



In connection with the exhibit of Alaskan religious art and artifacts currently on display at the Art Gallery of Villanova University, **Archpriest Nicholas Molodyko-Harris** will be presenting a lecture on **Tuesday, May 3, 7:00pm at the Connelly Center on the Villanova Campus**. This will be a wonderful opportunity to hear Fr. Nicholas and his personal experience of Orthodoxy in the 49th State. For more information, please see the flyer on the bulletin board.

Trip to Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City, PA

A group of woman from Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Medford, NJ



have planned a trip to Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City for **June 24-25** and want to know if any women from St Stephen Parish would be interested in attending as well. Accommodations will be at a guest house on the monastery grounds, which sleeps ten. The agenda will be planned by the Nuns. Please see **Father Victor** if you are interested or call **609-654-4865**.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

Children in Church

Christ Himself said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for such is the Kingdom of Heaven." (*Matthew 19:14*). It is possible for young children to remain in church throughout a service, *if they are taught to be quiet and respectful!* Many parishes have cry rooms or nurseries for infants and those who are too small to remain quiet throughout the entire Liturgy. Please be respectful to those around you if your child becomes fussy or out of control, and remove him from the nave of the church quickly. Although it should not be encouraged, if a very young child needs a snack, please clear away any leftover pieces. However, children should not have anything in their mouths when coming to Holy Communion. Further, it is never appropriate to allow a child to run down the aisles, play loudly, or carry toys that make noise. Eventually, children will be able to spend longer times in the Liturgy. That is where they should be, but remember the reason for coming to church is to pray and worship. Plan to have your children use the restroom and get a drink before church begins, and don't allow them to come and go continually. Consider bringing your children into the church at a time when the Liturgy is finished to "practice" church behavior. Teach them that they are visiting God's *very special* house, and they will need to have *very special* manners there.

Leaving Church

The respectful protocol is to leave the temple only after the final blessing, and after kissing or venerating the Cross held by the Priest at the end of the service. It is not acceptable to be in the church hall, kitchen, or an administrative office during the Divine Liturgy. Some parishes have church school at the end of the Liturgy... with the blessing of the Priest, this is the only exception allowed! Otherwise, those who leave early deprive themselves of a blessing.

After venerating the Cross and walking to the back of the nave of the church, it is customary to face the Altar, bow, and make the sign of the cross upon yourself before exiting the nave. (*Read Part 7 in the May 2016 Newsletter*)

April 2016

(NOTE: Grey denotes Fasting Days)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Slavonic Divine Liturgy is celebrated every Sunday at 8:30AM in St Michael Chapel Please check the Cathedral website for any changes to the schedule. www.ststephenscathedral.org/calendar.html						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Fourth Week of the Great Fast						
VENERATION OF THE CROSS 9:40 ^{AM} - 3 rd & 6 th Hours <i>Reader: Emily Murphey</i> 10:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy <i>Epistle: Christopher Jones</i> 4:00 ^{PM} - Mission Vespers at St Nicholas (Coatesville)			5:30 ^{PM} Confessions 6:30 ^{PM} Presanctified Liturgy	ANNUNCIATION (OC) 9:00 ^{AM} - Vesperal Liturgy (Slav) 7:00 ^{PM} - Vespers w/Bible Class	9:00 ^{AM} Presanctified Liturgy 6:30 ^{PM} - Akathist to the Theotokos	MEMORIAL SATURDAY 9:00 ^{AM} - Hierarchal Liturgy (with +MICHAEL) 1:30 ^{PM} - Sunday School Lenten Project 5:00 ^{PM} - Great Vespers
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Fifth Week of the Great Fast						
ST JOHN OF THE LADDER 9:40 ^{AM} - 3 rd & 6 th Hours <i>Reader: Eric DeFrancesco</i> 10:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy <i>Epistle: Michael Jones</i> 4:00 ^{PM} - Mission Vespers at Holy Assumption (Phila)			5:30 ^{PM} Confessions 6:30 ^{PM} Presanctified Liturgy	6:00 ^{PM} Canon of St Andrew (Slav) 7:30 ^{PM} Bible Class	9:00 ^{AM} Presanctified Liturgy (Slav) 6:30 ^{PM} - Akathist to the Theotokos	9:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy 5:00 ^{PM} - Great Vespers
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Sixth Week of the Great Fast						
ST MARY OF EGYPT 9:40 ^{AM} - 3 rd & 6 th Hours <i>Reader: Nina Gavula</i> 10:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy <i>Epistle: Michael McCarthey</i> 4:00 ^{PM} - Mission Vespers at St Michael (Wilm, DE)		7:30 ^{PM} Parish Council Meeting	5:30 ^{PM} Confessions 6:30 ^{PM} Presanctified Liturgy	7:00 ^{PM} - Vespers w/Bible Class	9:00 ^{AM} Presanctified Liturgy 6:30 ^{PM} - Akathist to St Lazarus	LAZARUS SATURDAY 9:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy 11:00 ^{AM} - Pre-Paschal Parish Clean-up Project 5:00 ^{PM} - Great Vespers
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Holy Week						
PALM SUNDAY 9:40 ^{AM} - 3 rd & 6 th Hours <i>Reader: Alexa Jensky</i> 10:00 ^{AM} - Divine Liturgy <i>Epistle: Larry Skvir</i> 4:00 ^{PM} - Mission Bridegroom Matins at St Stephen (Phila)	9:00 ^{AM} Presanctified Liturgy		6:00 ^{PM} Bridegroom Matins 7:00 ^{PM} Holy Unction	9:00 ^{AM} - Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Thursday 6:30 ^{PM} - Matins w/ Passion Gospels	9:00 ^{AM} Royal Hours 3:00 ^{PM} Vespers of Holy Friday 6:30 ^{PM} Matins of Holy Saturday	9:00 ^{AM} - Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Saturday 11:00 ^{PM} - Beginning of Paschal Services; Nocturne, Matins, Liturgy

PRAYERS



For our April Birthdays

Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, health, salvation, visitation, and furtherance in all good things to Thy servants, and preserve them for MANY YEARS!

Helen Szulak - 1
Kyle Housely - 1
Jackson George Radu - 3
Alison Litvak - 3
Margaret Pron - 3
Natalie Tapykoff - 4
Matushka Mary Geeza - 7
Elizabeth Gorodenchuk - 11

Katherine Gorodenchuk - 12
Michael Tapykoff - 12
Daniel Braekman - 13
Paulette Kevolic - 16
Daniel Rogers - 17
Katherine Ren - 18
David Rad - 19
Elaine Kasmer - 20
Olga Oprouseck - 20

Evan Ryan - 25
Sophia Ringe - 26
Viktor Beloblovsky - 26
Zachary Hulayew - 27
Pauline Englesson - 28
Carmen (Garza) Stearne - 28
Kristin LaMacchia - 29
George Radu - 30

For the Sick

O Christ our God, Who alone art our Defender: visit and heal Thy suffering servants, delivering them from all sickness and grievous pains and afflictions. Guide the hands of the physicians and nurses that attend to them so that all things may be done according to Thy Will. Raise them up from their bed of illness, so that they may continually offer hymns and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto Thee; through the prayers of the Most-holy Theotokos, the Holy Apostle and Physician Luke, the Holy Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon, and all the Holy and Venerable Unmercenary Physicians and Healers who have been well-pleasing to Thee throughout all the ages. For Thine it is to show us mercy and to save us, and to Thee do we ascribe Glory, together with Thy Father who is from everlasting, and Thy Most-Holy, Good, and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen!

Mary Popelak
Bogdan Arutyunov
Andrew Wagner
Keivan Galaviz

Ersilia Maximo
Arnold Jensky
Dimitry Hubiak

Eric DeFrancesco
Pauline Englesson
Michele Decker

Alice Kopistansky
Lois Brautigam
Maria Sedorcheva
Olga Gazak

For the Departed

O God of spirits and of all flesh, Who hast trampled down Death and overthrown the Devil, and hast given Life to Thy world, do Thou, the same Lord, give rest to the soul of Thy departed servants, in a place of brightness, a place of refreshment, a place of repose, where all sickness, sighing, and sorrow have fled away. Pardon every transgression which they have committed, whether by word or deed or thought. For Thou art a good God and lovest Mankind; because there is no man who lives yet does not sin, for Thou only art without sin, Thy righteousness is righteousness to all eternity, and Thy Word is Truth. For Thou art the Resurrection, the Life, and the Repose of Thy departed servants who have fallen asleep, O Christ our God, and unto Thee do we ascribe Glory, together with Thy Father, who is from everlasting, and Thine All-Holy, Good, and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen!

Memory Eternal! Вечная Память! Αιωνία η μνήμη!

Ever-Memorable Archpriest Alexander
Ever-Memorable Matushka Mary

Newly-departed Dorothy Vernak
Newly-departed Pelagia Voychuk
Newly-departed James Adams

MEDITATIONS ON THE DIVINE LITURGY OF THE HOLY EASTERN ORTHODOX CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH

BY NIKOLAI GOGOL

Then following the ritual of the primitive Church and the holy Christians of the first century who always remembered whenever they thought of Christ all those who had been nearest to His heart by the fulfillment of His commandments and by the holiness of their lives, the priest takes the other prosphoras so as to cut out of them portions in their memory and place them on the diskos or paten beside the "Lamb" or holy bread that represents the Lord Himself, since they themselves had a burning desire to be everywhere with their Lord.

Taking into his hand the second prosphora, he cuts out of it a portion in honor and memory of our most blessed Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, and places it on the right of the "Lamb", pronouncing the prophetic verse from the Psalm:

On Thy right hand stood the Queen, arrayed in gold in wrought with many colours. (Ps. 44:10 in the LXX)

Then he takes the third loaf in memory of the saints and with the spear removes nine portions in three rows of three each. The first is in memory of John the Baptist; the second of the prophets; the third of the apostles, and this concludes the first row and the first group of saints. Then he cuts out a fourth portion for the holy fathers and prelates; a fifth for the martyrs; a sixth for the holy and God-bearing fathers and mothers; and this concludes the second row and the second group of saints. The seventh is in memory of wonder-working unmercenaries or feeless doctors; the eighth of the ancestors of our Lord, Joachim and Anna, and of the saint whose day it is; the ninth of St. John Chrysostom or St. Basil the Great, depending on which Liturgy is being celebrated, concluding with the third row and the third group of saints. All these nine portions are placed on the diskos beside the holy bread or "Lamb", on its left (the priest's right). So Christ appears amongst His nearest and dearest; He Who dwells in His saints is seen visibly among them - God among the gods, a Man among men.



From the fourth loaf the priest removes portions for all the living: For all rulers, for Orthodox patriarchs and bishops, the Holy Synod, and for the reigning emperor and all his house, for all Orthodox Christians, and then he takes out particles for all persons whom he desires to mention by name or whom he has been requested to remember.

Finally, the priest takes the last loaf and removes from it particles in memory of the departed, praying at the same time for the remission of their sins, commencing with the patriarchs, the emperors, the founders of the church in which he is celebrating, the bishop who ordained him in case he is among the departed, and continuing on to the humblest of the faithful; also he mentions those whom he has been requested to remember, and those whom he himself wishes



to remember. At the end he prays for the forgiveness of his own sins and removes a particle in behalf of himself. All these particles in memory of the persons mentioned are placed on the diskos below the "Lamb". So around this holy loaf, this "Lamb" symbolizing Christ Himself, is collected His entire Church - triumphant in heaven and militant here on earth. The Son of Man appears amongst men, for whose sake He was incarnate and became man. Then the priest takes the sponge and carefully collects with it all the crumbs on the diskos, so that no fragment of the holy bread should be lost. The particles of the loaves removed for those who offered the loaves and for those for whom they were offered are, at the end of the liturgy, placed into the chalice, with the prayer:

Wash away, O Lord, in Thy precious Blood the sins of all who are remembered here, through the prayers of Thy saints.

On leaving the side table (prothesis), the priest bows as if to the incarnate Christ Himself and salutes in the form of the bread lying on the diskos the appearing of the heavenly Bread on earth. And he salutes it by censuring it with holy incense, after blessing the incense and saying the prayer:

To Thee, O Christ our God, we offer incense as an odor of spiritual fragrance; accept it at Thy heavenly altar and send down upon us the grace of Thy Holy Spirit.

Transporting himself in thought to the time of Christ's birth and turning the past into the present, the priest regards the side table or prothesis as the secret cave in which heaven was then transferred to earth. Heaven became a cave, and a cave became heaven. Having censured the asterisk or star-cover and placed it over the diskos, he regards it as the star which shone above the Child, for which reason he says:



(Read part 5 in the May 2016 newsletter)

And the star came and stood over the place where the Child was. (St. Matthew 2:9)

After censuring the first veil or cover, he covers the holy bread and diskos with it, reciting the Psalm in which the wonderful majesty of the Lord is sung:

The Lord is reigning, robed in beauty. (Psalm 93)

After censuring the second veil, he covers the holy chalice with it, saying:

Thy virtue, O Christ, has covered the heavens, and the earth is filled with Thy praise.

THE LIFE OF ST MARY OF EGYPT *(CONT'D FROM BACK COVER)*

Following 47 years in solitude, she met the priest St. Zosima in the desert, who pleaded with her to tell him of her life. She recounted her story with great humility while also demonstrating her gift of clairvoyance; she knew who Zosima was and his life story despite never having met him before. Finally, she asked Zosima to meet her again the following year at sunset on Holy Thursday by the banks of the Jordan.

Zosima did exactly this, though he began to doubt his experience as the sun began to go that night. Then Mary appeared on the opposite side of the Jordan; crossing herself, she miraculously walked across the water and met Zosima. When he attempted to bow, she rebuked him, saying that as a priest he was far superior, and furthermore, he was holding the Holy Mysteries. Mary then received communion and walked back across the Jordan after giving Zosima instructions about his monastery and that he should return to where they first met exactly a year later. When he did so, he found Mary's body with a message written on the sand asking him for burial and revealing that she had died immediately after receiving the Holy Mysteries the year before (and thus had been miraculously transported to the spot where she now lay). So Zosima, amazed, began to dig, but soon tired; then a lion approached and began to help him, that is, after Zosima had recovered from his fear of the creature. Thus St. Mary of Egypt was buried. Zosima returned to the monastery, told all he had seen, and improved the faults of the monks and abbot there. He died at almost a hundred years old in the same monastery.

O Venerable Mother Mary, pray unto God for us!



Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant. Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

AZ QUOTES

GREAT LENT 2016

MISSION VESPERS SCHEDULE

ALL SERVICES ARE SCHEDULED FOR 4:00PM

3rd Sunday (03 April)

St Nicholas Church, Coatesville

11 Oak St, 19320

4th Sunday (10 April)

Holy Assumption, Philadelphia

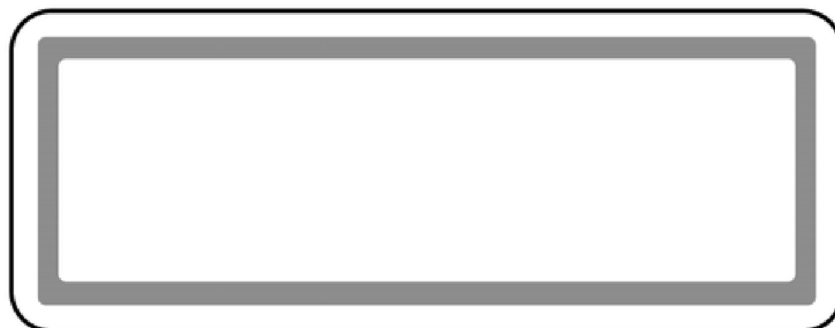
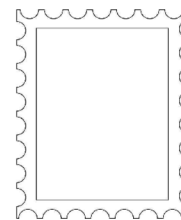
2800 Snyder Ave, 19145

5th Sunday (17 April)

St Michael, Wilmington

2300 W Huntington Dr, 19808

St. Stephen Orthodox Cathedral
Orthodox Church in America
8598 Verree Road
Philadelphia, PA 19111



The Life of St Mary of Egypt

She began her life as a young woman who followed the passions of the body, running away from her parents at age twelve for Alexandria. There she lived as a harlot for seventeen years, refusing money from the men that she copulated with, instead living by begging and spinning flax.

One day, however, she met a group of young men heading toward the sea to sail to Jerusalem for the veneration of the Holy Cross. Mary went along for the ride, seducing the men as they traveled for the fun of it. But when the group reached Jerusalem and actually went towards the church, Mary was prohibited from entering by an unseen force. After three such attempts, she remained outside on the church patio, where she looked up and saw an icon of the Theotokos. She began to weep and prayed with all her might that the Theotokos might allow her to see the True Cross; afterwards, she promised, she would renounce her worldly desires and go wherever the Theotokos may lead her.

After this heart-felt conversion at the doors of the church, she fled into the desert to live as an ascetic. She survived for years on only three loaves of bread and thereafter on scarce herbs of the land. For another seventeen years, Mary was tormented by "wild beasts - mad desires and passions." After these years of temptation, however, she overcame the passions and was led by the Theotokos in all things.



(continued on inside back cover)