



ST. STEPHEN'S QUARTERLY

A Newsletter of St. Stephen Orthodox Cathedral

8598 Verree Rd. Philadelphia, PA 19111

PASCHA OF 2012

A note from Fr. Victor...



Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

The celebration of Holy Week and Pascha is central to our lives as Orthodox Christians. From the very beginning of the Church, Christians observed this time with most reverence because in the feast of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ we find the fulfillment of all our hopes. As Ap. Paul writes: "If Christ did not

rise from the dead then your faith is in vain." (1 Cor. 15:14) The news of the Gospel brings us the witness of the apostles who have seen our Risen Lord and who have passed to us this assurance of life eternal. With the Resurrection of Christ death has no longer ultimate power over the human race and our salvation has been revealed to us. Our salvation is in our union with Christ by following His commandments and by carrying our crosses in our lives as He carried His Cross to Golgotha. That's why every year the time of Holy Week and Pascha is very special and dear to us because it allows us this precious opportunity to relive these events of our salvation through participation in the services of the Church. Through Lent, Palm Sunday and days of Passion Week we come to the night of Pascha in which the eternal light shines to us from the empty tomb and proclaims our salvation.

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

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LOOKING AHEAD:

(Please mark on your calendars these upcoming Feast Days and Events)

- **Sun, May 6: Visit by St. Tikhon's Mission Choir** (see page 4)
- **Sun, May 20: Graduate Recognition Sunday**
- **Thursday, May 24: Great Feast of Ascension of the Lord**
- **Monday, May 28: Memorial Day Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery** (see page 2)
- **Sunday, June 3: Great Feast of Pentecost**
- **Sunday, June 10: Sunday School Graduation and Pancake Breakfast**
- **June 11 — June 28: Apostles Fast**
- **Friday, June 29: Feast Day of Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul**
- **Sunday, July 15: Annual Church Picnic**
- **Week of July 16: St. Stephen's Vacation Church School**

HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA SCHEDULE

Friday, April 6 **Vespers & Holy Unction 7 PM**

Saturday, April 7 *Commemoration of raising of Lazarus from the dead*
Lazarus Saturday
Divine Liturgy 9 AM
Palm Sunday Vespers 5 PM

Sunday, April 8 *Commemoration of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem*
Palm Sunday
Divine Liturgy (Slav) 8:30 AM
Divine Liturgy 10 AM
Blessing of Palms and Pussy-Willows

Monday, April 9 **Bridegroom Matins 7 PM**
Great and Holy Monday

Tue, April 10 **Bridegroom Matins 7 PM**
Great and Holy Tuesday

Wed, April 11 **Bridegroom Matins 7 PM**
Great and Holy Wednesday

Thur, April 12 **Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9 AM**
Great and Holy Thursday
Matins with the reading of Twelve Passion Gospels 7 PM
Commemoration of the life-creating Passions of our Lord Jesus Christ

Friday, April 13 **Royal Hours 9 AM**
Great and Holy Vespers 3 PM
Friday
Matins with Lamentations and procession with the shroud 7 PM
Commemoration of Christ's Burial
Tomb Watch starts 10 PM

Saturday, April 14 **Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great with Old Testament readings 9 AM**
Great and Holy Saturday
Nocturne 11:30 PM
Beginning of Paschal Services

Sunday, April 15 **Procession, Matins and Christ is Risen! Divine Liturgy 12:00 AM**
Indeed He is Risen!
Christ's Holy Resurrection, Pascha of the Lord
Blessing of Paschal food and breaking of the fast following the service
Paschal Vespers 12 PM
Procession with the reading of Resurrection Gospels and blessing of Paschal food

Monday, April 16 **Paschal Divine Liturgy 9 AM**
Bright Monday
Egg Hunt for children after the service

Thursday, April 19 **Paschal Vespers 7 PM**
Bright Thursday

Saturday, April 21 **Paschal Divine Liturgy 9 AM**
Bright Saturday

Grave Blessing

One of the very important traditions of the celebration of the feast of Pascha is commemoration of our departed loved ones and blessing of their graves. With the Resurrection of Christ we also celebrate the general Resurrection and honor the places where the bodies of those who have fallen asleep rest awaiting the life of the age to come. Here at St. Stephen's we have a custom of starting the blessing of graves on St. Thomas Sunday (May 22) with grave blessings at Oakland Cemetery. Fr. Victor will be available for scheduling the blessing of the graves at other cemeteries as well and at St. Tikhon's Monastery during Memorial Day Pilgrimage.

St. Tikhon's Memorial Day Pilgrimage

For over 100 years many clergy and laity of our Church have been gathering at St. Tikhon's Monastery for the Annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage. We hope that many of St. Stephen's Parishioners will attend this event as this Memorial Day. We are arranging a car pool to help all those who are planning to participate at the Pilgrimage. Please contact Fr. Victor if you plan to go and need help with transportation.



PREPARING a TRADITIONAL PASCHA BASKET

PASKA: - The Easter Bread symbolic of Christ Himself who is our True Bread. Usually a round loaf baked with a golden crust decorated with a Cross. Sometimes a cross of dough is placed on top encircled by a plait giving it a crowned effect.

CHEESE: A custard-type cheese shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things.

HAM: The flesh meat popular with Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolic of the great joy and abundance of Pascha. Some may prefer lamb or veal. This is usually well roasted or cooked as well as other meats prepared in advance so that the festivity of the day will not be burdened with preparation and all may enjoy the Feast.

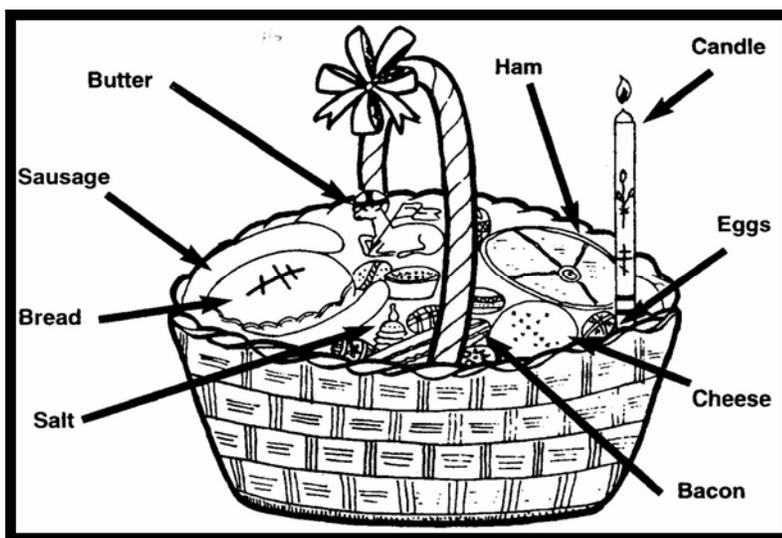
BUTTER: This favorite dairy product is shaped into the figure of a lamb or small cross and decorated as the cheese. This reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things.

KEILBASI: A spicy, garlic sausage of pork products, indicative of God's favor and generosity.

EGGS: Brightly decorated hard boiled eggs are indicative of new life and resurrection.

SALT: A condiment necessary for flavor reminding the Christian of his duty to others.

HORSERADISH: Horseradish mixed with grated red beets. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bitter -sweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.



These articles are placed in a wicker basket. A decorated candle is placed in the basket and is lit at the time of blessing. A linen cover usually embroidered with a picture of the Risen Christ or symbol with the words "Christ is Risen" is placed over the foods when brought to the church. A sweet wine may also be brought "for the Glory of God." In modern usage, all the things we abstained from during Great Lent are placed in the basket, and after the blessing are shared with the faithful at the Agape meal.

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Philadelphia, PA

His Grace Bishop Tikhon
Fr. Victor Gorodenchuk, Dean
Fr. Dn. George Zlatkowski, Deacon

Visit us on the Web:
www.ststephencathedral.org



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Visit by St. Tikhon Seminary Choir: Sun, May 6



This May our Cathedral will have the honor of hosting St. Tikhon's Seminary Mission Choir. St. Tikhon's Choir regularly travels to various churches to both provide an opportunity for many faithful to hear beautiful church music sung by an all-male chorus as well as to inform them about important work that is being done at St. Tikhon's in training future pastors our Church. This is also an important part of fundraising efforts for the seminary which relies primarily on donations from the Orthodox faithful. Our Cathedral regularly hosted the Mission Choir in the past and it was always a memorable event for everyone who came to the services. We ask you to mark May 5 and 6 on your calendars and generously support St. Tikhon's Seminary. Please invite your family and friends to attend our Church and to pray with us on those days.