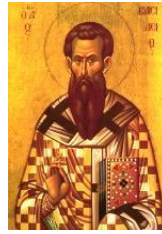


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THE NEW TESTAMENT PASACHA

FOR MOST AMERICANS a holiday is a one-day affair – at most, a holiday weekend. In the Church, however, Pascha, the Feast of Feasts, is celebrated for a much longer period. We observe Christ’s resurrection for forty days, concluding it with the Great Feast of His Holy Ascension and climaxed with the Great Feast of Pentecost. Based on the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost this season – and the book which contains the services celebrated every day – is called the Pentecostarion. *Pentecostos* is the Greek word for fiftieth.

The paschal season contains a number of special commemorations including:

Bright Week – For the first week of Pascha, the daily services are almost identical to the services of Pascha itself. One important characteristic of this week’s services is that they include no readings from the Psalter. With Pascha the New Covenant is in force – to emphasize this spiritual reality nothing from the Old Covenant is read this week.

Successive Weeks – While the services resume their regular format there are some reminders of the resurrection. “Christ is risen” and “Now that we have seen the resurrection of Christ” are sung every day. The Sunday resurrection services in the eight tones are sung daily as well. On Sundays The procession and the singing of the Paschalia and the paschal canon form part of our Church’s worship.

Mid-Pentecost – At the mid-point of the season we celebrate the feast of Mid-Pentecost, recalling Christ’s teaching in the temple and His promise of the Holy Spirit. This feast, unique to the Byzantine rite, is so emphasized because it was the patronal feast of the Great Church of Constantinople, Aghia Sophia (Christ, the Holy Wisdom). “We have come to the middle of those days which began with the saving Resurrection of Christ our God and end with the divine feast of Pentecost! Truly this day shines with the light of both feasts and unites them both. It radiates with the announcement of the Ascension of the Lord.”

Christ the Source of Living Water: The central theme of the Pentecostarion is that, through the resurrection, the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon the Church to transform the world. This extraordinary gift was expressed by Christ Himself in the image of living water, when He celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem with His disciples. “*On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.’ By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified*” (Jn 7:37-9).

This passage, read at the Divine Liturgy on Pentecost, sets forth the paschal mystery as a three-stage process. The first step is **the glorification of Jesus**, by which the Gospel means His saving death on the cross. The cross was hardly glory in the world’s eyes, but the eyes of faith sees Christ’s humbling Himself to death as His glory, as Christ said before His arrest, “*Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him*” (Jn 13:31). This is why the inscription on the cross in Byzantine churches is not the one placed there by Pilate (“the king of the Jews”) but rather “the King of glory.”

The world sees glory in terms of wealth, power, and ostentatious display. There is none of that in the cross. Christ’s “glory” is found in the depths to which He would go to take on our humanity, embracing even rejection, humiliation and death. This is why St Paul would say, “*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God... but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God*” (1 Cor 1:18, 23-25).

The second stage in the Gospel exposition of the paschal mystery is the bestowal of the Holy Spirit. This was possible only as a consequence of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, His resurrection and His ascension. We look again to Christ’s words here: “*If I do not go away, the Helper [Paraclete] will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you*” (Jn 16:7). “Going away” here means Christ’s return to the Father upon the completion of His earthly ministry.

(April2021Leaflets)

SUNDAY 1ST AFTER EASTER

Saturday, April 10 and Sunday, April 11, 2021

PARISH SERVICES

Holy Liturgy: Monday-Friday 8:30AM

Holy Liturgy: Saturday 4:30PM, Sunday 11:00AM

Matins/Orthos: Sunday 9:00AM

Holy Confession: Monday 4-6PM

Vespers: Saturday 3:00PM

Holy Rosary: Sunday 10:30AM

HEALING PRAYERS NEEDED

Prayers needed for our friends MaryAnn Astour, Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Jean Murad, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, APRIL 10

† Eugene Hutchinson, By John & Anita Iannotta

† Julia Nassimos, By Ibrahim & Hannan Barahmeh

† John Gazzal, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos

† William Chanatry, By Janet Chanatry & Family

THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 11

† Eugene Hutchinson, By John & Anita Iannotta

† Julia Nassimos, By Bruce & Sally Hodsoll

† Abdallah Ghryyeb, By Hesham & Najwa Marji

† John Gazzal, By Keith & Kathy Williams

† William Chanatry, By Janet Chanatry & Family

NEXT SATURDAY, APRIL 17

† Eugene Hutchinson, By Cheryl Kopyt and Family

† Julia Nassimos, By Bruce & Sally Hodsoll

† John Gazzal, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos

† William Chanatry, By Janet Chanatry & Family

NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 18

† Eugene Hutchinson, By Cheryl Kopyt and Family

† Julia Nassimos, By Bruce & Sally Hodsoll

† Abdallah Ghryyeb, By Hesham & Najwa Marji

† John Gazzal, By Keith & Kathy Williams

† William Chanatry, By Janet Chanatry & Family

RECENT RECEIPTS

Weekly Collection April 3/4: \$ 1935.00

Memorial Services: \$ 275.00