

April 25, 2021



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

TRIUMPHAL ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM PALM SUNDAY



Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ and manifest the Kingdom of God in the Liturgy of His Church. If this is your first time with us, give us a chance to get to know you.



A Word from the Holy Fathers

But Jesus did these things in their presence not to display pomp but as I have said, to fulfill prophecy, to teach self-denial and to comfort his disciples, who were grieving for his death. He was showing them that he would suffer all these things willingly. Mark well the accuracy of the prophets, how they foretold all these things, some from David's psalms, some from Zechariah. They had proclaimed them beforehand.

St. John Chrysostom



For sacraments, services,
instruction, home/office/hospital visits
please contact **Fr. Michael Anderson**

858-717-2172

Email powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org
Include "News at St John's" as the subject

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

We have come to it! We have journeyed through the desert of Great Lent together. Hopefully during this Great School of Repentance we have learned something new, deepened our faith to some extent and have grown closer to the object of our faith: Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man so that we can become like God. However, regardless of whether or not we think Great Lent has been as fruitful for us, the Church gives us an incredible opportunity to try once again and go deeper into our faith: Holy Week.

We have come to Holy Week when we not only think of the events of our Lord's Passion, but are able to enter into them, and become actual participants in the events that changed the world, not only historically, but in its very essence.

This week is truly a gift from God. Through out the week we are drawn into our Lord's love, thoughts and selfless deeds. The texts of the services, and the hymns are shining jewels that we can treasure and share with the world. They are full of the teachings of the Church and answer so many of the questions that people ask us about our faith.

I pray we will all commit to use this time wisely. Let us change our priorities this week. Let us enter into a new reality of self-sacrificing love for God, seeking to acquire the Holy Spirit and grow closer to Jesus Christ. This week let us live less for our selves and more for Him and for each other as we witness the selfless love of our Lord.

In Christ,



Parish Life

Paschal Services Please RSVP by Tonight 4/25

People will need to choose if they will be attending the midnight services (11:30pm Nocturns, Matins & Liturgy) OR the additional Paschal Liturgy on Sunday morning (10am). Only those who need to be at both due to their service to the church (choir members, altar servers, greeters, etc) will be able to attend both.

We are asking everyone who plans on attending either the midnight service of Nocturnes, Matins & the Paschal Liturgy (beginning at 11:30pm) or the Sunday morning Paschal Divine Liturgy (10am) to contact us to let us know. Since we are able to treat people who are vaccinated as part of one cohort we are also asking people to let us know if they have been fully vaccinated so we can get a sense of how many people we can fit in the church to allow for the required social distancing between cohorts (pods, households, etc). Vaccination is NOT required. It just helps us know where and how many people can fit in the church.

[Please contact Dn George Shumaik <gshumaik@ucsd.edu> \(858\) 699-0897 by Sunday night \(4/25\) with your information.](mailto:gshumaik@ucsd.edu)

Once we have the information and we see what the realities are we will let you know how we will proceed. We are considering having some room available in the hall for live-streaming if that would help. People may also need to stand outside on the porches. Again, we will have to wait and see and we will let you know.

[If you have any questions about any of this please contact ME at 858-717-2172 or powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org.](mailto:powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org)

Look for information about the details early this coming week.

Sunday (4/18) Auxiliary Meeting & Paschal Bake Sale

Today will be a meeting of the Auxiliary after the Divine Liturgy. New members are always welcome. Come and be part of this wonderful service organization at St John's.

The Auxiliary will also be selling Paschal Basket items in time for the feast. Everything will be available to pick up starting Friday April 30 and until Pascha in the hall after services.

Phyllis B and Tanya F have the order forms for whoever is interested to return them back by Palm Sunday April 25th

Basket Blessings

We will bless paschal baskets this year, though we will follow appropriate safety protocols.

Baskets will be blessed at the following times....

- After the Midnight Paschal Services (no fellowship meal)
- After the Sunday morning Paschal Divine Liturgy
- After Paschal Vespers Agape Service

Paschal BBQ & Egg Hunt—Sun 5/2

After the Paschal Agape Vespers we WILL have our lamb BBQ and Children's Easter Egg Hunt. Details to come!

Donations for Paschal Flowers

We are collecting donations for flowers for Holy Week & Pascha.



Please give as you are able and include "flowers" on your check

Parish Life

Confessions

I will be hearing confessions at the following times...

Wednesday (4/21) after Presanctified Liturgy

- Sunday 4/24 after Bridegroom Matins
- Monday 4/25 after Bridegroom Matins
- Tuesday 4/26 after Bridegroom Matins
- Wednesday after Matins for the Lord's Mystical Supper (which begins at 6pm)
- Thursday after Divine Liturgy (which begins at 10am)

There are also times available during the day on Mon-Thurs but we will need to schedule a time. I will not be hearing confessions after Holy Thursday, unless it is an emergency and we will need to find a time that works.



Sign-ups for Holy Week/Paschal Services

At the Greeters' Table there are sign-ups for the following:

- Holy Saturday Morning 15 Old Testament Readings
- Keeping Vigil Over the Tomb— Reading the Psalter on Holy Friday & Before Liturgy on Holy Saturday & The Acts of the Apostles on Holy Saturday after Liturgy up to the Midnight Services.
- Paschal Vespers Gospel in Various Languages—Indicate your name and the language you can read fluently.
- Make & Bring in Red Eggs for Pascha

Lenten Food Drive Led by Children of St John's

Please JOIN our YOUTH in spreading the LOVE of CHRIST this Lenten Season.

The Church School students are working with the San Diego Food Bank to collect donations for needy families in San Diego County.

The Food Drive will run from **April 4th to May 3rd.**

Red bins will be placed inside the door to the hall for canned/dry goods and monetary donations can be made out to St. John's with Food Drive in the memo line.

No glass containers and no homemade items, please.

Please see the flyer for more details!

May the Lord bless our children for bringing us this opportunity to follow our Lord's commands to love our neighbor!

Let's all support their efforts!



Help Decorate the Tomb Holy Friday Morning

Come and help prepare the Tomb for the Lord. People gather on Holy Friday at 9/9:30am to set things up and arrange the flowers.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Entrance into Jerusalem - Tone 1

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Your passion,
You did confirm the universal Resurrection, O Christ God!

Like the children with the palms of victory,
We cry out to You, O Vanquisher of death;
Hosanna in the Highest!

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

Entrance into Jerusalem 2 —Tone 4

When we were buried with Thee in Baptism, O Christ God,
We were made worthy of eternal life by Thy Resurrection!

Now we praise Thee and sing:
Hosanna in the highest!

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

KONTAKIA

Entrance into Jerusalem — Tone 6

Sitting on Thy throne in heaven,
Carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God!
Accept the praise of angels and the songs of children who sing:

Blessed is He that comes to recall Adam!

PROKEIMENON

Tone 4 — Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord. / God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us. (*Ps. 117:26b, 27b*)

V. O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever. (*Ps. 117:1*)



ALLELUIA

Tone 1 — *V.* O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! (*Ps. 97:1*)

V. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (*Ps. 97:5*)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. ⁶ Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel — John 12:1-18

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, ⁵ "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. ⁷ Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

⁹ When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus also to death, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

¹² The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" ¹⁴ And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written, ¹⁵ "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!" ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. ¹⁷ The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. ¹⁸ The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

Our Life in Christ—The Deacon's Beacon

The Image of Humility

Entering into Holy Week the Orthodox Church is liturgically traveling to the cross and the grave with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. The Divine Services contain all the sensory elements that characterize the ritual of our worship. On this journey, we see, we hear, we smell, we touch, and we taste. Those outside of the Orthodox Faith might characterize this activity as religious theater, a passion play staged to recount historical events of two millennia past. Remembrance for us is not merely a recollection but an affirmation that the Kingdom is here and now within the life of Church. The language of our worship is in the present tense.

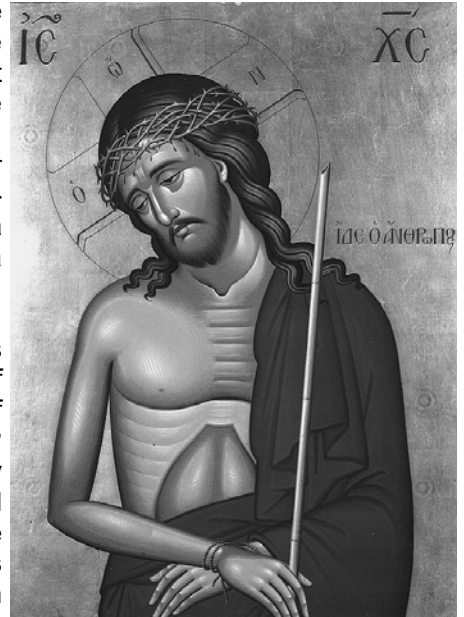
Among the visual images presented for us to see, to contemplate and to venerate during Holy Week are two poignant icons. One is titled "The Bridegroom" and the other "Extreme Humility". While there is variability in the writing and titling of these images, those presented here are illustrative of the message they are meant to convey.

The Bridegroom icon is typically placed in the center of the church for the first three days of Holy Week concomitant with the Matins service of the same name. The image depicted is of that written from John 19:5 "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, Behold the man!" There is nothing in this depiction to engender joy in the observer. Christ's countenance is sad, clothed in purple mockery as "King of the Jews" with his crown of thorns and a reed as His scepter. It is by any usual parameter of critique a picture of defeat.

Even more incongruous is the moniker of a bridegroom for this image. Within the New Testament, Jesus does refer to Himself as a bridegroom. "And Jesus said to them, 'Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast'" (Matthew 9:15) An expanded review of the entire Bible will find numerous references to bride and bridegroom as similes of the relationship of God and His creation, as a type of marriage full of love and fidelity at least on God's part. Within the Divine Services we also listen to the parable of the foolish and wise virgins, those prepared and those unprepared for the Bridegroom who is coming. (Mathew 25:1-13)

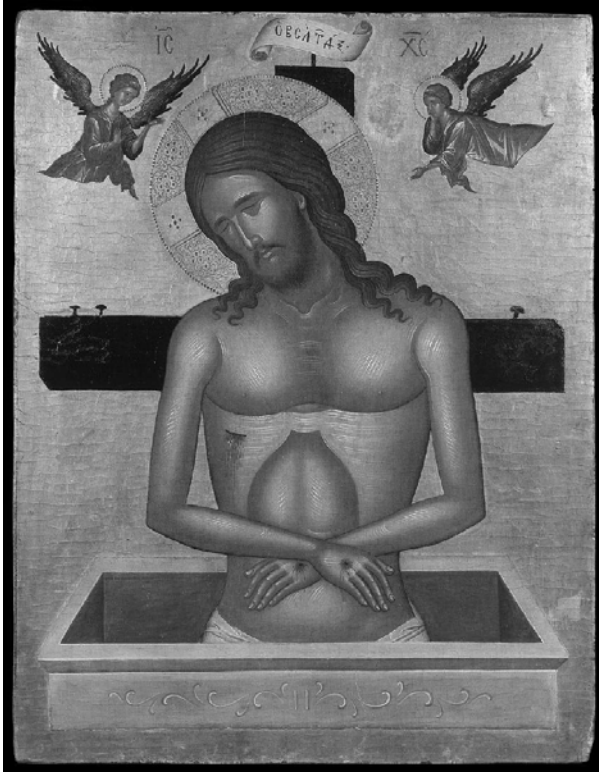
The question left for us to ponder then becomes, "Are we prepared in fealty to the Bridegroom to receive Him when He comes at midnight – at the end of the day – at the end of time?"

The Extreme Humility icon takes further into the depth of the tragedy of the death of Jesus. In this image He is depicted as slain. His eyes are closed. He bears the print of the nails and the wound on His side. He is within His tomb. If the icon of the Bridegroom depicts Him as defeated in life, then this icon surely must be interpreted as His being defeated in death. If that were true, there would be no reason for us to gather, there would be no Church and we would die without hope under the crush of our sins.



THE BRIDEGROOM

Our Life in Christ—The Deacon's Beacon



EXTREME HUMILITY

Thank God that is not the truth. The real Truth will rise on the third day. The real Truth will trample down death by death. The real Truth will forgive our sins. The real Truth suffered the mockery of the trial, the cross, the nails, the spear and the abandonment of His people. The real Truth is the Bridegroom. The real Truth is the expression of ultimate and Extreme Humility. The real Truth is our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ who voluntarily suffered and died for the forgiveness of our sins and our salvation.

In our sojourn on this earth, we are all called to take up our own cross(es) daily whatever they may be. Within the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us about the price we pay for following after Him. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.” He comforts us in saying “Blessed are the poor in spirit (humble) for they shall see God”. We are called to be humble as He is humble.

“At the arrival of unjust persecution, bow your head. At the jeers of false accusations, cross your arms over your heart, whether physically or interiorly, and gratefully receive what is spitefully offered. And when faced with the question, ‘How far, how far do I tolerate this shame, this injustice’, remember that the answer is the grave. This is what the icon labels ‘Extreme Humility’, and it is humility that we must strive to emulate each day.” – Heiromonk Irenaeus. Amen.

—Dn George Shumaik



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services and parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Sunday April 25

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Holy Monday April 26

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Holy Tuesday April 27

10:30am — Father's Virtual Café

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Holy Wednesday April 28

6:00pm — Matins for the Institution of the Lord's Supper

Holy Thursday April 29

10:00am — Vespers & Divine Liturgy for the Institution of the Lord's Supper

6:00pm — Service of the Passion Gospels

Holy Friday April 30

3:00pm — Vespers w/ Entombment of our Lord

6:00pm — Service of Lamentations w/ Procession of Winding Sheet

Holy Saturday May 1

10:00am — Vespers Liturgy with 15 OT Rereadings

11:30pm — Nocturns, Matins & Paschal Divine Liturgy

Holy PASCHA (Sunday) May 2

10:00am — Paschal Divine Liturgy w/ Procession

1:00pm — Paschal Agape Vespers w/ Reading of Gospel in Multiple Languages

Followed by BBQ & Childrens' Egg Hunt

Bright Monday May 3

10:00am — Paschal Divine Liturgy w/ Procession

For more dates please visit our website: www.stjohnofd Damascus.org

Many Years!

Birthdays

Patricia Pelachik 4/27

Anna Kaminskaya 4/30



Confessions are held on Saturdays after Great Vespers or by appointment with Fr Michael.

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired & Dn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA