

April 21, 2024



# THE IMAGE...

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

[www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org)

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

5TH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—TONE 5

ST MARY OF EGYPT

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Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ & 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 and fill out a visitor card.

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## A Word from the Holy Fathers

If you want to serve God, prepare your heart not for food, not for drink, not for rest, not for ease, but for suffering, so that you may endure all temptations, trouble and sorrow. Prepare for severities, fasts, spiritual struggles and many afflictions, for "by many afflictions is it appointed to us to enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (Acts 14:22); "The Heavenly Kingdom is taken by force, & those who use force seize it." (Mt 11:12)

— *St Sergius of Radonezh*

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Include Something in the Bulletin or Be Included in our Weekly E-mails

E-mail [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org) with your request.



## Parish Life

### **Paschal Bake Goods & Food Available**

The Auxiliary will be offering a selection of Paschal baked goods and foods for our parishioners.

An order form has been included in this week's bulletin. Orders are due by April 28, the latest. People will be able to pick up their orders on Holy Wednesday or Thursday



### **Lazarus Saturday 8:45am Proskemia w/ Fr Alexander**

Next Saturday at 8:45am Fr Alexander will serve the Proskemia in the center of the church educating people about it and its meanings.

People are encouraged to bring a list of the names of the people in their household family to be remembered as part of the service.



### **Pancake Breakfast Saturday after Liturgy**

Since there is a lot to do next Saturday in preparation for the services for Palm Sunday (decorating the church, preparing the palms & pussywillows, etc.) we will have a Lenten pancake breakfast after Divine Liturgy.

Plan on staying for pancakes and to help!



### **New People Needed to Volunteer as Greeters & Counters**

Due to illness and people traveling, we are in urgent need for new people to volunteer as Greeters & Counters.

There are easy to follow "how to" documents for each of these ministries to help newcomers.

Please speak with Fr. Michael if you are willing to help.

### **Adult Ed Class on Healing & Sacrament of Unction Mon April 22 — 7pm**

We will be celebrating the Sacrament of Unction on Tuesday April 23. To help prepare to participate in the Sacrament we will be having a 1-session class on its meaning and place in healing. The class will be offered in person in the church hall and via zoom (see online parish calendar for Zoom link).



### **People Needed to Prepare Palms & Pussywillows next Saturday**

After Divine Liturgy this coming Saturday we will need people to help prepare the palms and pussywillows to be blessed at vigil for Palm Sunday and given to the faithful.

Please plan on staying and helping!

### **PASCHAL PLANNING SHEET POSTED**

Our annual Paschal Planning Sheet is posted in the narthex. Please review it and see how you can participate.

Opportunities include:

- Decorating the temple and Christ's tomb (no experience required!)
- Reading one of the 15 Old Testament passages on Saturday morning
- Reading the Gospel in different languages on Sunday
- Carrying the winding sheet during processions (tall individuals encouraged!)
- Supplying essential items unique to these services (extra light olive oil, red eggs)
- And more!

There are opportunities for people of all ages. If you're not sure about something—don't be shy! Ask Fr Michael or other parishioners for more info on what these opportunities entail.

## Today's Worship — Hymns

### TROPARIA

#### **Resurrection—Tone 5**

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,  
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,  
born for our salvation from the Virgin;  
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the  
flesh,  
to endure death,  
and to raise the dead  
by His glorious Resurrection.

#### **St John of Damascus —Tone 8**

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, & purity!  
Enlightener of the universe!  
& divine inspiration to monastics  
by your teachings we are all enlightened,  
& by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of  
Damascus,  
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our  
souls!

#### **St Mary of Egypt —Tone 8**

The image of God was truly preserved in you,  
O Mother,  
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.  
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh  
for it passes away;  
but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal.  
Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary,  
rejoices with the angels.

### KONTAKIA

#### **Resurrection—Tone 5**

You descended into hell, O my Savior,  
shattering its gates as Almighty,  
resurrecting the dead as Creator,  
and destroying the sting of death.  
You have delivered Adam from the curse,  
O Lover of Man,  
and we cry to You: "O Lord, save us!"

#### **St John of Damascus — Tone 4**

Let us the faithful sing praises to John,  
worthy of great honor the composer of hymns.  
The star & teacher of the Orthodox Faith,  
the defender of its doctrine.  
Through the might of the Lord's Cross he  
overcame heretical error!  
Now he is fervent in prayer to Christ God,  
to grant forgiveness of our sins.

#### **St Mary of Egypt —Tone 3**

Having been a sinful woman,  
you became through repentance a bride of  
Christ.  
Having attained angelic life,  
you defeated demons with the weapon of the  
Cross.  
Therefore O most glorious Mary, you are a bride  
of the Kingdom.

#### **Steadfast Protectress—Tone 6**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,  
Constant advocate before the Creator:  
Do not despise the cry of us sinners,  
But in your goodness, come speedily to help us  
who call on you in faith.  
Hasten to hear our petitions & to intercede for  
us, O Theotokos,  
For you always protect those who honor you!

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Epistle — Hebrews 9:11-14

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation.

<sup>12</sup> It was not through the blood of goats and calves but through his own blood that he entered into the Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup> Indeed, if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer (sprinkling those who have been defiled) could sanctify to restore the purity of the flesh, <sup>14</sup> how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to offer divine service to the living God?

### Epistle — Galatians 3:23-29

<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, locked up to wait for the faith which would later be revealed.

<sup>24</sup> Hence, the law was our tutor which was to bring us to Christ, so that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor, <sup>26</sup> and you are all God's children, through faith in Christ Jesus! <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> If you are Abraham's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

### PROKEIMENON

**Tone 5** (Resurrection) — You, O Lord, shall protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever. (Ps. 11:7)

V. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly! (Ps. 11:1a)

**Tone 4** (St. Mary of Egypt) - God is wonderful in His saints, / the God of Israel. (Ps. 67:35a)

### ALLELUIA

**Tone 5** - V. I will sing of Your mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Your truth from generation to generation. (Ps. 88:1-2)

V. For You have said: Mercy will be established forever; Your truth will be prepared in the heavens. (Ps. 88:3)

**Tone 1** — V. I waited patiently for the Lord; He attended to me and heard my supplication. (Ps. 39:1)

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Gospel — Mark 10:32-45

<sup>32</sup> They were on their way up to Jerusalem, and as Jesus was going in front of them, they were stunned; and those who followed were afraid. Again, he took the Twelve [aside] and began to tell them about the things that were going to happen to him. <sup>33</sup> "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and deliver him to the Gentiles. <sup>34</sup> They will scourge him, mock him, spit on him, and kill him. On the third day, he will rise again."

<sup>35</sup> James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached Jesus and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we will ask!"

<sup>36</sup> He replied, "What do you want me to do for you?"

<sup>37</sup> They answered, "Grant to us that we may sit, one at your right hand, and one at your left hand, in your glory."

<sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

<sup>39</sup> They replied, "We are able!"

Jesus said to them, "You shall indeed drink the cup that I drink, and you shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with! <sup>40</sup> However, to sit at my right hand and at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for whom it has been prepared."

<sup>41</sup> When the ten heard this, they became upset with James and John.

<sup>42</sup> Jesus called them, and told them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the nations lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> But it shall not be so among you! Whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant.

<sup>44</sup> Whoever of you wants to become first shall be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### Gospel — Luke 7:36-50

<sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. He entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat at the table. <sup>37</sup> And behold, a woman who was a sinner in the city, when she learned that he was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of perfume.

<sup>38</sup> Standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and she wiped them with the hair of her head. She also kissed his feet and anointed them with the perfumed oil. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have perceived who is touching him and what kind of woman this is, that she is a sinner."

<sup>40</sup> Jesus said to him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

He replied, "Speak, teacher."

<sup>41</sup> "A certain lender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> And when they could not pay, he forgave them both. Tell me then, which of them will love him the most?"

<sup>43</sup> Simon answered, "The one to whom he forgave the most I suppose."

Jesus said to him, "You have judged correctly."

<sup>44</sup> Turning to the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered into your house, and you gave me no water for my feet; but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped [them] with the hair of her head. <sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but since the time I came in, she has not ceased kissing my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume. <sup>47</sup> Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven because she has loved much. But the one to whom little is forgiven loves little." <sup>48</sup> Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

<sup>49</sup> Those who sat at the table with him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

<sup>50</sup> Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

## Our Life in Christ

### PREPARING FOR PASCHA

Orthodox Christianity calls us to live on two different but intimately related levels. One is the level of daily experience: life in family and on the job, paying bills and doing the shopping, cutting the grass and getting the kids to their various activities. It is also life marked by anxiety in a world of war and political upheaval, of poverty and violence. It is a life that for many people has been aptly described as “nasty, brutish and short.”

Yet there is another level, another reality that can radically transform our daily routine and even the tenor of the world around us. It is the level of our faith, where celebration of the Paschal mystery turns every Sunday and feast day into the First and Eighth Day of the New Creation, enabling us to participate already here and now in the coming glory of the Kingdom of God.

This second level, this other realm or dimension of our life, is one of prayer and silent meditation, of life-giving communion, of joyous celebration, and of healing, reconciling love.

A major reason for the Lenten journey is to equip us for the spiritual warfare necessary to hold these two levels together. As problems and tensions mount in our personal and collective life, we are constantly tempted to focus on one level or the other. Either we give in to the secularizing pressures of the society we live in and pay mere lip-service to the faith, power and authority of Orthodox Christianity; or we reject the reality of this world by seeking solace in the esthetically beautiful worship of a comfortable church of our own making. Either of these choices merely deepens the compartmentalization of our life and activity. And we wonder why the experience of Sunday morning seems to have so little to do with the realities and urgencies of Monday.

As we move further through the Lenten fast—in a world of conflict, brutality and injustice—it is important to remember what Scripture and the entire Tradition tell us about this world. Although the fact is hardly reflected in the morning’s headlines, the world was created, and is constantly being recreated, by the God of love and mercy, whose deepest desire is to lead everyone, including ourselves, to the perfection and joy of eternal communion in the life of the Holy Trinity. This is a world where people of faith can behold the hand of God in everyday miracles of forgiveness and reconciliation; and in more astounding miracles of unexpected healings, weeping icons, and self-sacrifice.

This is God’s world, and we are part of it. As such, our primary calling is to announce and to live out the Paschal message of salvation and eternal life, offered through the victory of Christ over the powers of sin and death.

To do so, however—to facilitate the transformation of the fallen world into a world of faith and love—requires that we devote our time and our energy to the arduous work of inner transformation and spiritual awakening. The Lenten period invites us to do this by increasing our prayer, by fasting, by giving more attention to the poor and needy around us, and by nourishing ourselves with frequent readings from Scripture and the Holy Fathers. I’d like to conclude with a word about these readings.

Of the many appropriate passages from patristic sources that can provide Lenten nourishment, one of the most powerful and beautiful concludes the Paschal homily by Melito of Sardis, composed toward the end of the second century. Quiet and repeated meditation on its vision of Christ offers one way to “unite the two levels,” to lift our broken and weary world to the very heights of heaven.

## Our Life in Christ

*"I am your freedom," Christ declares.  
"I am the Passover of salvation,  
I am the Lamb slaughtered for you,  
I am your ransom,  
I am your life,  
I am your light,  
I am your salvation,  
I am your resurrection,  
I am your King.  
I shall raise you up by my right hand,  
I will lead you to the heights of heaven,  
There shall I show you the everlasting Father."*

*He it is who made the heaven and the earth,  
And formed humanity in the beginning,  
Who was proclaimed through the law and the prophets,  
Who took flesh from a virgin,  
Who was hung on a tree,  
Who was buried in the earth,  
Who was raised from the dead,  
And ascended to heaven,  
Who sits at the right hand of the Father,  
Who has the power to save all things,  
Through whom the Father acted from the beginning and forever.*

*This is the alpha and omega,  
This is the beginning and the end,  
The ineffable beginning and the incomprehensible end.  
This is the Christ,  
This is the King,  
This is Jesus,  
This is the commander,  
This is the Lord,  
This is He who rose from the dead,  
This is He who sits at the right hand of the Father,  
He bears the Father and is borne by him.  
To Him be the glory and the might for ever! Amen.*



## LOOKING AHEAD

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

### Mon April 22

7:00pm — Adult Ed: On Healing in the Church—the Sacrament of Unction

### Tues April 23

6:00pm — Holy Unction

### Wed April 24

10:30am — Father's Café

6:00pm — Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten Potluck

### Fri April 26

11:00am — Sacrament of Confession

4:00pm — Sacrament of Confession

6:00pm — Sacrament of Confession

### Sat April 27—Lazarus Saturday

8:30am — 3rd Hour

8:45am — Proskomedie w/ Fr Alexander

9:00am — Divine Liturgy followed by Pancake Breakfast

Assemble Palms & Pussywillows & Decorate Church

6:00pm — Vigil for Palm Sunday

### Sun April 28—Palm Sunday

8:30am — Hours

9:00am — Divine Liturgy followed by Pancake Breakfast

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

### Mon April 29 — Holy Monday

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

**For more dates & links please visit our website: [www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar)**

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

## Many Years!

### *Name Days*

Mary Caetta (5th Sunday of Lent)

Mark Sladack 4/25

### *Birthdays*

Gini Callahan 4/22

Steven Brown 4/23

Patricia (Anna) Pelachik 4/27

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