



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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3RD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT: VENERATION OF THE CROSS MARCH 23, 2025

TROPARION, KONTAKION & PROKEIMENON

Troparion – Tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

Troparion – Tone 1

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance! Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, // preserve Thy habitation!

Kontakion – Tone 7

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross. The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell: // “Enter again into Paradise!”

Instead of the Trisagion, we sing:

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection we glorify.

Prokeimenon – Tone 6

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance!
V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

LITURGICAL COMMEMORATION

3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of the Cross

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. “He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both “the power of God and the wisdom of God” for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).

EPISTLE & GOSPEL READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son,

today I have begotten You.” As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”.

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK, CAREGIVERS, AND DECEASED (To add a name, please email daricekeyes@gmail.com)

For the Sick / Caregiver

For the Deceased

Hannah (3/2)	Subdeacon Sergius (3/16)	Kyra (3/9)
Betty (3/2)	Melody (3/16)	
Trudy (3/2)	Liam (3/23)	
Anthony (3/2)	Kelly (3/23)	
Carmine (3/9)	Alexandra (3/23)	
Marianne (3/9)	Father Paul (3/23)	
Desiderio (3/9)	Matushka Mary (3/23)	
Michael (3/16)	Deborah (3/23)	
Charlotte (3/16)	Father Daniel (3/23)	

SERVICES

Service Schedule for the Week of March 23

Sunday March 23 – **VENERATION OF THE CROSS** 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall. Mission Service at 5:00 PM followed by lenten potluck supper in Daria Hall.
Monday March 24 – **FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION** 7:00 PM Great Compline with Litya
Tuesday March 25 – **FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION** 9:30 AM Vespereal Liturgy
Wednesday March 26 – 5:30 PM Confession, 6:30 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy followed by Confession
Friday March 28 – 8:30 AM Confession, 9:30 AM Pre-Sanctified Liturgy followed by Confession
Saturday March 29 – **Memorial Saturday** 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy, 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession and Catechumen Class in the church basement

DONATIONS

Weekly Giving

March 16 – 108 adults, 12 youth, \$3,159

ORTHODOXY 101

Pascha Tradition – Blessing of Basket

Outside of Liturgical observances, the traditional Pascha basket is at the center of the Slavic Pascha celebrations. In America, baskets differ among families, usually filled with the foods and treats that the family especially missed during the fast. There are, however, specific items included in a traditional Pascha basket, each symbolic to the events of Holy Week, the Resurrection, and the Christian life. These foods are listed below. Each family will put together Pascha basket that is unique and special. The purpose of this guide is to share the contents of a traditional Pascha basket.

Pascha Bread

A tall bread with decorations on top, usually the symbol XB ("Christ is Risen"). Breads can be made using paper molds, as well as metal tins, such as coffee cans. Pascha Bread is a rich, sweet bread made with milk, butter, eggs, and yeast. The

bread reminds us that Jesus is the bread of life (John 6:35). The yeast is a symbol of the New Covenant; the Jews made unleavened bread, and since we are children under the New Covenant, we make leavened bread.

Pascha Cheese

This sweet cheese dessert is Pascha bread's paschal companion. When put in the Pascha basket, this treat is blessed by the priest and then enjoyed from Pascha up until Pentecost. Some enjoy a custard-like cheese that is sweet and mild, reminding us of the moderation we should have towards everything.

Red Eggs

Include some red eggs in your basket as a symbol of the resurrection. The red egg, which we crack, reminds us of the tomb from which Christ arose. This is because of the miracle of new life which comes from the egg, just as Christ miraculously came forth from the tomb, shattering the bonds of sin. Of course, red for His blood shed for us, and the miracle from St. Mary Magdalene when the egg in her hand miraculously turned red as she proclaimed "Christ is Risen" to the non-believing Emperor.

Butter

Traditionally, butter is often molded into the shape of a three-bar cross or a lamb, and reminds us of the goodness of Christ.

Salt

Reminds us that we are the salt of the earth referenced in Matthew 5:13-16 : "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." Salt is also necessary for flavor, and reminds the Christian of his duty to others. As salt preserves food, we are to be as salt in the world.

Candle

Pascha baskets may include a candle to be lit when the priest blesses the baskets. Using a decorated flameless candle could be a good way to adorn your basket, as well as a good way to include children in the Holy Week services without worry. During the eating of the Paschal food, this candle is placed in the middle of the table. Jesus is the true light who brightens the whole world through the radiance of His Holy Resurrection.

Basket Cover

White cloths traditionally adorn the basket when it is brought to Church to be blessed. The cloths can be embroidered or printed with paschal designs and embellishments. The cover reminds us of Christ's burial shroud. A traditional basket cover is made with a white cloth embroidered with the words, "Christ is Risen," but there are many beautiful designs available.

Wine

Reminds us that God takes ordinary food and uses it as an aid in making us holy. From Matthew 26:27-29 "Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.' "

Horseradish with Beets

In some traditions grated horseradish is mixed with grated red beets, which is symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds, but sweetened with sugar because of the Resurrection. The bitter-sweet red mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ. Having a bitter herb also reminds us of the vinegar that was offered to Christ while he was on the cross.

Cured Meats: Sausage, Bacon, Ham

Typically the items below are included in a traditional Pascha Basket. The meat products symbolize the sacrificial animals of the Old Testament, foreshadowing the true sacrifice of our Savior, who became for us "the Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world." As we learn from the prayer of blessing, the meat products also symbolize the fattened calf prepared for the Prodigal Son on his return to his Heavenly Father:

Sausage - spicy, garlicky and scrumptious, they remind us of God's favor and generosity.
Bacon - symbolizes the overabundance of God's mercy.
Ham - is a symbol of the joy and abundance of Pascha!

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today our Church School children will be preparing peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as a Lenten offering to be distributed to the folks who attend the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK). We will meet upstairs in Daria Hall after Holy Communion. All children are invited to participate in this charitable event, as our Lord directed us to feed the hungry. PB&J sandwiches will be available for our helpers! Hope to see you there!

There will be a Men's Club meeting this Saturday, March 29 at the Mercer County Park basketball courts area.

On Sunday, April 6 Mother Abbess Christophora from the Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, PA will give a lecture during Coffee Hour. Please plan on staying for this lecture.

The Ladies Assumption Altar Society will be selling chances today for a handmade boy's Easter basket filled with Easter goodies! \$2 per chance, or 3 for \$5. The winner will be announced during Coffee Hour.

Choir Etiquette: Our choir works very hard learning music that is both beautiful and simple enough for the congregation to sing along. We practice on Sundays from 9:15 – 9:45, once a month on Saturdays from 3:30 – 4:45, and during Lent an extra practice every Saturday from 4:00 – 4:45. “Dropping in” to sing with the choir and hoping to follow along isn't as easy as it sounds, and is strongly discouraged. If you can carry a tune and are committed to practicing, we welcome you to join us to “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord.”

Catechumen classes will be held every Saturday after Vespers. Everyone is invited to attend the classes, but those who wish to convert to the Orthodox faith must attend.

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Tom Sowanick – March 23

Maximus Dorvil – March 24

Sosi Sengal Tesfa – March 27

Have a blessed birthday and may God grant you many years!

COFFEE HOUR

**** If you are unable to accommodate your hosting date, please advise Darice as soon as possible so changes can be made.***

Hosts are responsible for providing and setting up the refreshments in Daria Hall at 9:00 AM and after Holy Communion, cleaning up after Coffee Hour including washing, drying and putting away dishes, taking out the trash, wiping down the tables, and cleaning up the Coffee Room including turning off and cleaning the coffee and tea pots. Hosts will be informed in advance if cream cheese, butter, or milk is needed. PLEASE NOTE: Your assigned Coffee Hour Support Person will provide guidance, however, the Support Person will leave Daria Hall at 9:55 AM to attend church services. If you have arrived late or are not finished, you will be provided the key to lock the Hall when you are leaving for church services. If you have any questions, please contact Alla Strauss.

SUGGESTED MENU:

Bagels / Breads

Donuts / Pastries

Desserts - let Alla know ahead of time if you will need desserts so they can be thawed on Saturday

Fruit

Salad

Tortilla Chips & Salsa

Hummus & Pita

Sugar-free dessert

Oreos (they are all non-dairy)

If serving pork, please provide an alternative for those who do not eat pork.

NOTE: Hosts may provide a luncheon for a specific event or holiday (Panikhida, birthday, anniversary, holiday) with advance notice to reserve the specific date to host the event. The hosts will be responsible for all food preparation for such a luncheon.

Mar. 23 **FAST** Chris Kasmer, Nina Laushell
Mar. 30 **FAST** Herman & Francine Meyer, Madeleine Sekulich & Mark McDevitt
Apr. 6 **FAST** Christine Waite, Alla Strauss
Apr. 13 **FAST** Alex Godun, Melody Stavisky
Apr. 20 **PASCHA – No Coffee Hour**
Apr. 27 Alan & Mimi Berck, Isaiah Maldonado
May 4 **FOCA Club, Kielbasa & Pierogi luncheon fundraiser**
May 11 Nina Schmidt, Monia & Jim Pitra
May 18 Anne Cheslock, Darice Keyes
May 25 Inna Lebedeva, Mihaela & Tiberiu Milosav
June 1 Blake & Jessica Kilgore, Alex & Rebeca Medina
June 8 Grace Ramus, Virgiliu & Gabriela Plesa
June 15 Sami Bachir, Tyler Burger
June 22 **FAST** Matthew Anderson, Ramazi & Kahtuna Shubitidze
June 29 Nancy Mitsos, Ekaterina & Stanislav Uritsky
July 6 Fiyori Habtesilasse, Lemlem Woldearegay
July 13 **St. Vladimir Feast Day Celebration**
July 20 Helene Hopkins, Mary Ellen Jones
July 27 Amber Touch, Eleni Athanatos & Tom Sowanick

Have a blessed Lenten journey to Pascha!