# THE ORTHODOX MESSENGER

April 2021, Vol. 29, Issue 4

#### **HOLY WEEK**

OLY WEEK BEGINS with the *Bridegroom Matins* of Monday. For the last 30+ years that Service has been celebrated at 6:30 AM (and again on Tuesday and Wednesday), since Matins is a morning service, by definition However, we also frequently serve Matins by "anticipation" the evening prior. For example, our Vigils (Vespers and Matins) on Saturday evening, and the "Matins of Holy Friday" served on Great Thursday and so forth. All this is to say that this year we will serve the *Bridegroom Matins* "by anticipation" in the evening.

The first **Bridegroom Matins will be served on Sunday, April 25 at 6 PM** (sung by the Women's Quartet), then again on Monday and Tuesday evenings at 6 PM (most parishes actually follow this practice). We may return to our morning routine next year, but we shall see. What about the usual evening *Presanctified Liturgies* of the first three days? Being a Vespers, preceded by a day of fasting in preparation to receive Communion, the *Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts* most usually begins for us in the late afternoon. This year the schedule will be adjusted: the Monday and Tuesday *Presanctified* will be served at 10 AM and Wednesday at 6 PM. Please see the April calendar.

#### MEANING OF THE BRIDEGROOM MATINS

The time of any given service is not incidental, for example: Genesis 1:5 tells us that "there was evening and morning, one day." So, the evening Vespers begins the new liturgical day: We sing *O Joyous Light of the holy glory...* as the sun sets, telling us that Christ is the "true light that enlightens every person that comes into the world" (John 1:9). *Matins* means "morning." We move out of darkness into the light of day singing at the end of Matins: *Glory to Thee, Who hast shone us the Light.* We keep watch in the darkness for Christ the Bridegroom who comes at mid-

night!

The Matins of the first three days of Holy Week are called the *Services of the Bridegroom*. The name comes from the central figure in the well-known parable of the Ten



Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). The title Bridgroom suggests the intimacy of love. It is not without significance that the kingdom of God is compared to a bridal feast and a bridal chamber. The Christ of the Passion is the divine Bridegroom of the Church. The imagery connotes the final union of the Lover, Christ and the beloved, His Church. The title Bridegroom also suggests the Parousia (the Greek word we use for the Second Coming). Perhaps a better phrase than "Second Coming" is "Glorious Appearing," since Christ is indeed with us, as He said, "even unto the end of the age." The aforementioned parable is related to the glorious appearing of the Son of Man, and is associated with the need for spiritual vigilance and watchfuless, by which we are enabled to keep the divine commandments and receive the blessings of the age to come. The Troparion Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight... is sung at the beginning of the Matins on Great Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. This hymn (text appears below) relates the worshiping community to that essential expectation: watching and waiting for the Lord, who will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight, and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching; and again, unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless. Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be weighed down with sleep, lest thou be given up to death, and lest thou be shut out of the Kingdom! But rouse thyself, crying: "Holy, holy, holy, art Thou, O our God!" Through the Theotokos have mercy on us!

#### **CONFESSIONS**

Those who receive Holy Communion each week are asked to make their confession at least monthly. Confessions are heard as follows:

Fridays (check the calendar for exceptions), 11:30 AM-1 PM Saturdays beginning at 4:45 PM, then during and after the Vigil

Tuesday-Thursday afternoons—by appointment (telephone or in person)

On Holy Monday we commemorate the Righteous Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob (Genesis 37–50) who is a prototype of Christ, illustrating the mystery of God's providence, promise and redemption. Also, on Great and Holy Monday we read about the cursing of the fig tree (Matthew 21:18-20). In the Gospel narrative this event is said to have occurred on the morrow of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:18 and Mark 11:12). For this reason it found its way into the liturgy of Great Monday. The episode is also quite relevant to Great Week. Together with the event of the cleansing of the Temple this episode is another manifestation of Jesus' divine power and authority and a revelation as well of God's judgment upon faithlessness. The fig tree is symbolic of a fruitless, empty and dry faith in Christ. Its meaning is not historical, but applies to "me" now.

Christ's judgment on the faithless, unbelieving, unrepentant and unloving will be certain and decisive on the Last Day. This episode makes it clear that nominal Christianity is not only inadequate, it is also despicable and unworthy of God's kingdom. Genuine Christian faith is dynamic and fruitful. It permeates one's whole being and causes a change. Living, true and unadulterated faith makes the Christian conscious of the fact that he is already a citizen of heaven. Therefore, his way of thinking, feeling, acting and being must reflect this reality. Those who belong to Christ ought to live and walk in the Spirit; and the Spirit will bear fruit in them: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22-25).

On Holy Tuesday the Church calls to remembrance two parables, which are related to the glorious appearing of the Lord. The one is the parable of the Ten Virgins

(Matthew 25:1-3); the other the parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). These parables point to the inevitability of the Christ's glorious appearing and deal with such subjects as spiritual vigilance, stewardship and especially accountability. From these parables we learn at least two basic things. First, Judgment Day will be like the situation in which the bridesmaids (or virgins) of the parable found themselves: some ready for it, some not ready. The time one decides for God is **now** and not at some undefined point in the future. The tragedy of the "closed door" of the Parable is that individuals close it, not God. The exclusion from the marriage feast, the Kingdom, is of our own making and reflects our current spiritual situation. Second, we are reminded that watchfulness and readiness do not mean a wearisome, spiritless performance of formal and empty obligations. Most certainly it does not mean inactivity and slothfulness. Watchfulness signifies inner stability, soberness, tranquility and joy. It means spiritual alertness, attentiveness and vigilance, inspired by love of our Savior. Watchfulness is the deep personal resolve to find and do the will of God.

On Holy Wednesday the Church invites the faithful to focus their attention on two figures: the sinful woman who anointed the head of Jesus shortly before the passion (Matthew 26:6-13), and Judas, the disciple who betrayed the Lord. The former—a sinner—acknowledged Jesus as Lord, while the latter—a disciple—severed himself from the Master. The one was set free, while the other became a slave. The one inherited the kingdom, while the other fell into perdition. These two people bring before us concerns and issues related to freedom, sin and repentance.

—borrowed and edited from https://www.goarch.org/bridegroom

### A Message from our Head Usher

Dear Parish: We are currently blessed to have a total of 40 people in the church. This includes *everyone* that is not behind the Altar. The ushers have a tough job telling people that the church is full. Please do not go in the church if you have been told that it is full or the sign in the doorway says that the church is full. Here are some tips to remember and help your ushers:

- 1. Dress as if you might have to stand outside in the cold. You can sit in your car and tune your radio to FM 87.7 to listen to the service. The reception has been better recently.
- 2. Arrive at least 15 minutes before the Liturgy begins (the Hours begin at 9:40 AM) if you need to be inside. If you arrive late, or just as the service starts, the church will already be full.
- 3. If you can rotate out, please let the usher know so that they can let someone else in for part of the service. Please do consider rotating.
- 4. We are trying to keep a few seats available for our elderly or infirm parishioners at each service. —Shannon Agni Winterton

### **EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

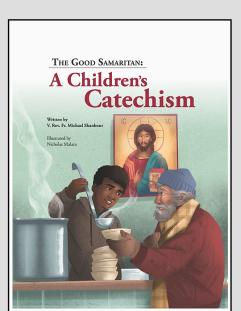
- THE REDWOOD EMPIRE FOOD BANK distribution will take place on Wednesday, April 14 and 28. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 4 PM.
- ON THE FIFTH THURSDAY of Great Lent (this year on April 15) we will sing "Matins with the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete" and hear the Life of St. Mary of Egypt, interspersed. We begin at 9 AM, and finish about 11:30 AM.
- THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE the Great Martyr falls on April 23. However, when it falls before Holy Week, it is transferred to Bright Week. We will celebrate on the Old Calendar date of May 6, with the Paschal Divine Liturgy at 9 AM.
- DECORATING, CLEANING AND POLISHING: Lazarus Saturday (April 24), 2 PM. See Denise Pellizzer to sign up to assist her and the others with flowers and palms. We will also polish the brass candle stands and lampadas that afternoon to prepare for Holy Week and Pascha.
- PLEASE PLAN AHEAD: No Confessions will be heard after Holy Wednesday. "Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of repentance" (2 Cor. 6:2) Holy Week is the time of the Lord's passion and many Services, and to enter into that great mystery, we confess first, then place our attention on the Lord, not ourselves.
- RED EGGS FOR PASCHA: Shannon Winterton will be dying eggs for Pascha, using a yellow onion-skin method this year. Please start collecting skins for them. The dying will take place on Holy Tuesday, April 27, after the morning Presanctified (10–11:30 AM). Please call Shannon at (707) 331-3228 to let her know you are available to help.
- FATHER JAMES will continue to do online Zoom Scripture Study, on Thursdays at 7 PM, rather than on Wednesday evenings. The next two sessions will complete the study of the Lord's Prayer (using Fr. Alexander Schmemann's booklet), April 1 and 8. He will then begin a series of talks on the Book of Proverbs, beginning April 15.
- SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION is now open. See the following <a href="https://www.steugenecamp.org">https://www.steugenecamp.org</a> Camp will take place from July 11–17 at Camp Arroyo in the hills above Livermore. Scholarships are available—see Fr Lawrence, who will be attending camp.
- ST. SERAPHIM WEEK: Plans are being made now for the annual Saint Seraphim Week for Kids, here June 14–18, 10 AM-1 PM each day. Registration info will be forthcoming.
- PHOTO-DIRECTORY: Please send your address and phone updates to our Parish Secretary Bobbi Griovski.
   She needs your help to keep the directory up to date.

#### **BAPTISMS**

On Friday evening, April 23, the Catechumens and their God-parents will attend the 6 PM Matins for Lazarus Saturday and then a one hour final baptismal catechesis "walkthu." The following morning, God willing, we will gather at 9 AM for the final exorcisms and begin the baptisms, followed by the Divine Liturgy for the Feast. Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. Please keep in your prayers our catechumens: Amanda, Andrew, Zephyr and Anja Merriss, John Robert Peacock and Daryl Charalambous. Some will be baptized on Lazarus Saturday, some will remain catechumens until Pentecost.

#### **NEW IN THE BOOKSTORE**

The *Good Samaritan* (\$35) is a first-of-its-kind catechism written specifically for young people (ages 6-12) to communicate the unchanging



truths of the Orthodox Faith in the most accessible and engaging way. This beautifully illustrated, hard cover book (100+ pages) catechism follows the patristic model of sin as illness, Christ as the Medicine and the Church as the Hospital for the healing of the soul. The introduction and thirteen interrelated chapters form a perfect kid-friendly catechism for use with priests, Sunday school teachers, and parents. Chapters can be taken in one-at-a-time,

as brief lessons or as bedtime story reading. It may also be used as part of a homeschooling curriculum.

### RANDOM INFORMATION

There are always little and big projects to complete here at the Church. Perhaps someone would like to tackle one or two of the following tasks: Polishing the brass candle-stands in St. Seraphim; Finding a home for the flat screen TVs that were kindly donated to the parish by the Bodega Bay Inn (the TVs are in the Parish Hall by the piano); Cleaning the six candle chandeliers in St. Seraphim—this involves unclipping each chandelier from its chain to take it down (two people needed), removing the wax and thick layer of dust, and re-hanging them.

Over the years it's been a challenge to care for the parish vineyard, most especially since Gabriel Griovski reposed in the Lord. We all remember Gabe organizing the trimming, picking and crush. After Gabe, some of the men, under the direction of Norm Vachon, made an effort to care of the vineyard, but it proved to be too much. For the last few years the vines have not been tended. Recently, a Russian gentleman and his wife, from Sacramento, were here and interested in the vineyard, he being a winemaker. At this point he is tending the grapes and will give us some wine eventually. Francis Seraphim Ranney keeps the rows in between mowed. Anyway, that's the latest on that area.

Just before Lent the Fresco Fathers, Patrick and Moses, completed the fresco of "Christ at the Home of Martha and Mary." They will return after Pascha to work on the fresco of "Christ healing the blind man," as recorded in John 9. Plans are finally underway—as previously announced—to bring two highly-accomplished painters from Minsk, Belarus—Anton and Ekaterina Daneiko—to work with our painters. Fr. Patrick is a great admirer of their work, and is looking forward to their arrival. The soonest we might expect them would be August or September. The Daneikos will live in the Intern Apartment while they are here. The scaffold will be set up in the church—we think—on the north side transept (i.e. opposite side of the choir) for at least four months. As I understand it, the frescoes that will be painted will be, from the top down: 1) St. Thomas meeting Christ after the Resurrection, 2) Luke and Cleopa eating with Christ after the Resurrection, 3) St. Peter walking (rather, sinking) on the sea, 4) Bottom level: St. Lucia of Syracuse, St. Marina, Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, St. Johanna the Myrrhbearer and St. Anna the Mother of the Theotokos.

The Director of the Diaconal Vocations Program (DVP) for the Orthodox Church in America, Archpriest Kirill Sokolov from San Francisco, asked me recently if our parish would once again host the DVP Practicum, as we did two years ago. The proposed dates are July 26–29. Our parish "hospitality crew" (cooks, registration, etc.) gave an enthusiastic blessing for this. We are currently waiting for confirmation by the Metropolitan to approve those dates.

The Fathers did not ask for many words. They received one spiritual word, left for the desert, and lived for many years with that word. They attempted to put it into practice and they were nourished by it. We say, and we want to hear, lots of words, but we do nothing to put them into practice. When someone talks a lot, he becomes spiritually weak.

—St. Sophrony of Essex, England

It is a great art to succeed in having your soul sanctified. A person can become a saint anywhere. He can become a saint in Omonia Square [central Athens] if he wants. At your work, whatever it may be, you can become a saint through meekness, patience, and love. Make a new start every day, with new resolution, with enthusiasm and love, prayer and silence—not with anxiety so that you get a pain in the chest. — St. Porphyrios, *Wounded by Love* 

If y son once wrote to a friend saying something to this effect: that we are God's witnesses necessarily, because the world will not read the Bible, but they will read our lives. Their belief in the divine nature of the faith we possess will be influenced by our lives. We must present to the investigation of the critical minds of our age the realities of lives transformed by the mighty power of God... The standard of practical, holy living has been so low among Christians that the least degree of real devotedness of the higher Christian walk is looked upon with surprise and often even with disapproval by a large portion of the church. For the most part, the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ are satisfied with a life so conformed to the world in almost every respect that, to a casual observer, no difference is discernible.

—Hannah Whitall Smith The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life (1875)

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## **APRIL 2021**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 28 —St. Gregory Palamas	29	30	31	APRIL 1	2	3
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		• 8 AM, Matins • 5 PM, Vespers for the Feast of St.	<ul><li> 8 AM, Festal Matins</li><li> 6:15 PM, Presanctified</li></ul>	<ul> <li>8 AM, Matins</li> <li>7 PM, Study of the Lord's Prayer with Fr.</li> </ul>	• 8 AM, Matins • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions • 6 PM, Presanctified	<ul> <li>3:30 PM, Catechesis On Marriage</li> <li>5 PM, Vigil – Bringing out of the Precious Cross</li> </ul>
		Innocent of Alaska		James*	o i w, i resanctified	out of the freelous closs
4 – Sunday of the Cross	5	6	7	8	9	10
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		• 8 AM, Matins	• 8 AM, Matins	• 8 AM, Matins	• 8 AM, Matins • 11:30 AM–1 PM,	• 11 AM, Baptism
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		Repose of St. Tikhon		• 7 PM, Study of the	Confessions	• 3:30 PM, Catechesis On
		(transferred from April 7)	• 6:15 PM, Presanctified	Lord's Prayer with Fr. James*	• 6 PM, Presanctified	Holy Unction • 5 PM, Vigil
11 – St. John Climacus	12	13	14	15 – Great Canon	16	17
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		• 8 AM, Matins	<ul> <li>8 AM, Matins</li> <li>4 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank</li> <li>6:15 PM, Presanctified</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>9 AM, Matins and the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete</li> <li>7 PM, Parish Council</li> <li>7 PM, Study of Proverbs with Fr. James*</li> </ul>	No Morning Service  • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions  • 6 PM, Matins of the Akathist to the Theotokos	• 3:30 PM, Catechesis On Death and the Funeral • 5 PM, Vigil
18 - St. Mary of Egypt	19	20	21	22	23	24 – Lazarus Saturday
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		• 8 AM, Matins	• 8 AM, Matins • 6:15 PM, Presanctified	<ul><li> 8 AM, Matins</li><li> 7 PM, Study of Proverbs with Fr. James*</li></ul>	• 8 AM, Matins • 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions • 6 PM, Matins • 6:45 PM, Baptismal Catechesis	<ul> <li>9 AM, Baptisms and Divine Liturgy</li> <li>2 PM, decorate Church, polish candle stands</li> <li>5 PM, Vigil / blessing of palms</li> </ul>
25 - PALM SUNDAY	26 – Holy Monday	27 – Holy Tuesday	28 – Holy Wednesday	29 – Holy Thursday	30 – Holy Friday	31 – Holy Saturday
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy/ Procession	• 10 AM, Presanctified • 4 PM, Confessions	• 10 AM, Presanctified • 4 PM, Confessions	• 4 PM, Redwood Empire Food Bank • 4 PM, Confessions	• 11:30 AM, Vesperal Liturgy	• 9 AM, Royal Hours • 3 PM, Vespers of Holy Friday	• 1 PM, Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Saturday
• 6 PM, Bridegroom Matins	• 6 PM, Bridegroom Matins	• 6 PM, Bridegroom Matins	• 6 PM, Presanctified	• 6 PM, Matins of Holy Friday (12 Gospels)	• 6 PM, Matins with Lamentations	• 11:30 PM, Nocturn, Paschal Matins/Liturgy

<sup>•</sup> Fr James holds a Scripture Study each Thursday via Zoom. A link is sent out on our Parish GROUPS forum each week.

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 25 – Palm Sunday	26 – Holy Monday	27- Holy Tuesday	28 – Holy Wednesday	29 – Holy Thursday	30 – Holy Friday	May 1 – Holy Saturday
<ul><li>10 AM, Divine Liturgy/ Procession</li><li>6 PM, Bridegroom Matins</li></ul>	<ul><li> 10 AM, Presanctified</li><li> 4 PM, Confessions</li><li> 6 PM, Bridegroom Matins</li></ul>	<ul><li>10 AM, Presanctified</li><li>4 PM, Confessions</li><li>6 PM, Bridegroom Matins</li></ul>	• 4 PM, Confessions • 6 PM, Presanctified	• 11:30 AM, Vesperal Liturgy • 6 PM, Matins of Holy Friday (12 Gospels)	• 9 AM, Royal Hours • 3 PM, Vespers of Holy Friday • 6 PM, Matins with Lamentations	• 1 PM, Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Saturday • 11:30 PM, Nocturn, Matins and Liturgy
2 - PASCHA	3 – Bright Monday	4 – Bright Tuesday	5 – Bright Wednesday	6 – Great Martyr George	7 - Bright Friday	8 – Bright Saturday
<ul><li>12 AM: Matins and Liturgy</li><li>1 PM, Paschal Vespers</li></ul>	• 9 AM, Paschal Matins and Divine Liturgy	• 5 PM, Paschal Vespers		• 9 AM, Paschal Liturgy and Feast of St. George the Great Martyr	St. Alexis Toth  • 5 PM, Paschal Vespers	<ul><li>9 AM, Paschal Liturgy</li><li>11 AM, Baptism</li><li>5 PM, Great Vespers</li></ul>
9 – Thomas Sunday	10	11 – Radonitsa	12	13	14	15
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy		Blessing of Graves  • 10 AM, Sebastopol  • 11 AM, Forestville  • Noon-ish: Healdsburg  • 1:45 PM, Windsor  • 2:30 PM, Santa Rosa	• 5 PM, Vespers	• 7 PM, Study of <i>Proverbs</i> with Fr James		• 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
16 – Holy Myrrhbearers	17	18	19	20	21	22
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy			• 5 PM, Vespers	• 7 PM, Parish Council • 7 PM, Study of <i>Proverbs</i> with Fr James	• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Sts. Constantine and Helen	• 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
23 – Paralytic	24	25	26 – Mid-Feast	27	28	29
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy • 2 PM, Wedding (out of town)		• 5 PM, Vespers	• 9 AM, Water Blessing	• 7 PM, Study of <i>Proverbs</i> with Fr James	• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	• 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions
30 – Samaritan Woman	31	JUNE 1	2	3	4	5
• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy	• Noon, Memorial Day Panikhida at Santa Rosa Cemetery		• 5 PM, Vespers	• 7 PM, Study of <i>Proverbs</i> with Fr James	• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions	• 5 PM, Vigil/Confessions