

St. Mark Evangelizer

Newsletter for Saint Mark Orthodox Church - 7124 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

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Saint Mark Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Archdiocese of Washington DC, under the omaphor of His Beatitude, Metropolitan, Tikhon.

Divine Liturgy: Sunday 9:30AM

Weekday Feasts 9:30 AM

Confession: Saturday 5:00PM

Vespers: Saturday 5:30PM

Church School: Following Sunday Divine Liturgy (September - May)

Rector: Archpriest, Gregory Safchuk

Telephone: (301) 229-6300

www.saintmarkoca.org

A Prayer

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war. Especially for the victims and all those involved in the struggle in Russia and Ukraine. We pray for Thy peace and Thy mercy in the midst of the great suffering people are now inflicting on each other. Accept the prayers of Thy Church, so that by Thy goodness, peace may return to all peoples.

We also pray O Lord our God, to remember and have mercy on our Orthodox brothers and sisters in Russia and Ukraine who are involved in violent conflict. Remove from their midst all hostility, confusion and hatred. Lead everyone along the path of reconciliation and peace. We pray Thee, hear us and have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen!

The Genesis of Conflict

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars;... nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places" (Matt. 24: 6-7) With these words, our Lord tells us of the end times, the conclusion of which no one knows the day and hour of. But they seem to accurately describe our world and our time. We seem divided and conflicted on so many levels - socially, politically, nationally, globally and personally. But in the beginning, it was not so. We were created to exist socially among other beings (both human and animal) and this according to the Lord, is good. Harmony characterized the relationship of man

with God and all other elements of creation prior to the fall. However, when the serpent tells Eve, "you will not die... your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil", his words are in conflict with those of God's and his intention is certainly in conflict with that of God's. Once embraced and acted upon, those words put Adam and Eve in conflict with God as well.

Conflict enters life in the fallen world very early on. God tells the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel". (Gen. 3:15) We need not look far to see the prevalence of conflict both within

us and around us on a global and very personal scale. Nature at times even seems in conflict with itself, and we feel helpless and frustrated. While we accept and endure this reality, we pray for and trust in God's mercy and providence. Human conflict in our fallen state, is inevitable. In our marriages, families, parishes, monasteries as well as cities and countries, we are often thrown against each other, at times unwillingly, in disagreement - sometimes violently. Our faith is shaken and we may wonder where God is. But even so, as Christians, we can seek and find God and goodness in the midst of conflict. War brings out both the best and worst



in people. By this harsh reality, we may even find our own place in the moral spectrum.

Conflict can bring the proud low, and provide opportunity for the humble and lowly to be comforted and exalted. If we accept this process patiently and faithfully, even our own rough edges can be smashed and smoothed off. By focusing on God and His goodness, even in and through conflict; reconciliation and spiritual growth can occur. Through the virtues of humility and obedience, the sting of conflict is abated and the Prince of Peace can be glorified. The way of peace is to speak the truth out of love and accept the results. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God!

- Fr. Gregory

LIGHT

Submitted by Matuskha Alexandra Safchuk

At the reading of the book of Genesis during the Presanctified Liturgy, a lit candle is placed on top of the Gospel book on the altar table. When the reading is concluded the priest takes the candle and the censor, turns to the people, raises the candle, blessing the people and chanting, “The light of Christ illumines all!” In this action the Church proclaims that all the prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in Christ, who is the light of the world, who alone opens our minds to Truth (Schmemmann, Great Lent, 57). “The light of Christ illumines all!”

During the first Presanctified Liturgy of this Lent I bowed my head at the exclamation, “The light of Christ illumines all!” In that moment I felt myself connected, in God’s time and space, with the millions of other Orthodox Christians who are bowing their heads or have bowed their heads or will bow their heads in this sacred act, in the sacred space of the Church, as a single candle gives light and we acknowledge that no matter what happens, no matter what the narrative or prognostication or opinion de jour, “The light of Christ illumines all!”



Photo by Victor Lutes

In this we recognize that there is darkness all over the place. Plenty of darkness. Darkness outside, and also inside, of us. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, a man well acquainted with the purveyors of darkness and evil in the world wrote, “the line separating good and evil does not pass through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either-but right through every human heart...” It’s a bold thought and



Photo by Victor Lutes

indicts each of us, and him. We know that we are all capable of good, and evil. “The light of Christ illumines all!”

But what can we do in a world that spins so desperately out of control? We seem to be jumping from one runaway train to another. Hardly a chance to catch our collective breath before the next breathtaking, unex-

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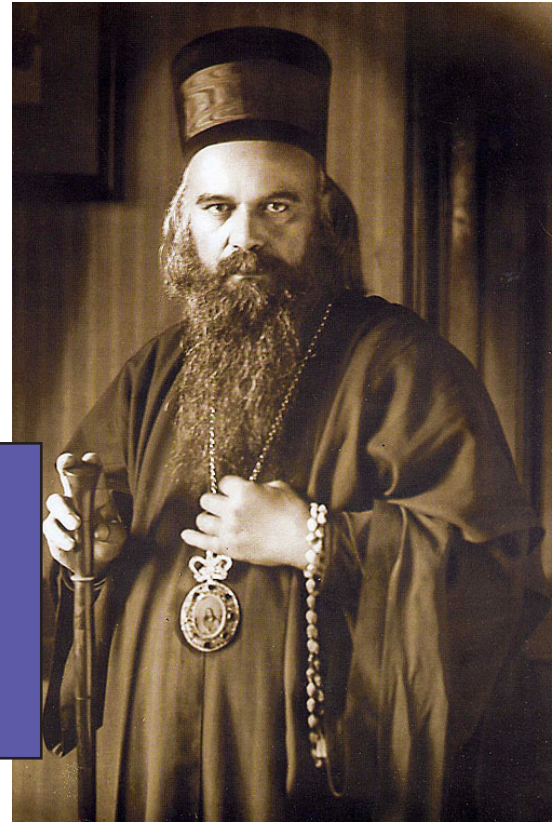
LIGHT

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pected and unwelcome, calamity. Once again, with just shot glasses full of information, we rumble on, wind in our face, as gripping disaster seems evident at every turn. “The light of Christ illumines all!”

St. Nikolai Velimirovic, who compiled for us books and books on the lives of the saints, told Orthodox Christians to be careful to not let the temptation of irrelevancy take us away from our high calling. Against a backdrop of sickness and war, and cer-

“...be careful to not let the temptation of irrelevancy take us away from our high calling.”



tainly confusion and concern, our tools of prayer, fasting and giving alms sometimes seem hardly up to the task. Who among us hasn’t heard, and said, “all I can do is pray” as if it is a grain of rice to feed a nation. But the reality is that when we participate in those actions we are looking intently at the One who leads out of the chaos. “The light of Christ illumines all!”

So, come boldly to the throne of God, driven by prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We are enough. We are able. We are adequate. Open the scripture anywhere. It is full of accounts of disagreements and strife. Peopled by those who resisted evil and those who cooperated with evil. But Christ will prevail. He is in it for the long haul, for the full measure, for clarity and brightness. “The light of Christ illumines all!”

With hope in the Resurrection and love in our Lord,
Matushka Alexandra Safchuk

TURNING BEESWAX INTO ICON CORNER CANDLES

Submitted by Don Truitt

I am a hobbyist beekeeper and am entering my twelfth season of this wonderful avocation. I was called into beekeeping over the course of a few days in May 2010. During that time frame, usually while commuting, I would occasionally listen to a podcast produced by Khouria Frederica Mathewes-Green and was surprised to discover through one of her podcasts that she had taken up beekeeping. My wife, Jan, and I know Khouria Frederica by virtue of being amongst the founders of Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Linthicum, MD, where Khouria Frederica and Father Gregory Mathewes-Green were the founding Khouria and priest.

After listening to Frederica's podcast, I told my wife about it. Her immediate reaction was, "Oh, you're a gardener – you should try beekeeping as well". I quickly dismissed the idea of becoming a beekeeper, but my wife still thought it was a great idea. Within a day or two, the Wall Street Journal ran a front-page article titled, "A Backyard Battleground to Save the Honeybee", which included an interview with a Bethesda beekeeper who lived about a mile or two from our home. On the heels of Khouria Frederica's podcast and my wife's idea that I should become a beekeeper as well, the Wall Street Journal article got my attention.

Then, another couple days later, as I was speaking to our own Matushka Sasha at coffee hour, I mentioned that I was hearing a lot about beekeeping. Her immediate reaction was, "Oh, that's a very Orthodox thing to do" and also, "there are three beekeepers in the parish". That was the final push needed to convince me that perhaps I was being called into being a beekeeper. So, I decided to learn, study, and pray for a year to test the calling. During April of 2011, I set up my first two beehives.

Beekeeping is a relatively expensive hobby, but there are many benefits. My wife was correct in connecting my gardening hobby with the possibility of enjoying beekeeping. Among the many benefits is seeing these wonderful, productive, and complex creatures in a way that few people get to observe. Being a beekeeper has helped me appreciate and value God's natural world in new and exciting ways. When I took up the hobby, I was working as an insurance attorney and really valued the way that working with bees makes one slow down and "put aside all earthly cares". Bees don't like fast movements at all! It is a good way to get stung – even with protective equipment.

Anyhow, as a beekeeper, one of the byproducts of harvesting honey is also harvesting beeswax. When bees go foraging for nectar to take back to the hive, they put it through a complex process to convert it into honey. At first, the honey has too much moisture and must be dried down to about 18% moisture to prevent fermentation. Once this is accomplished, the bees must cover the honey with wax, which comes from their wax glands. It takes eight parts of honey to make one part of wax.

As a hobbyist, I do not necessarily harvest a lot of honey. The average beehive in Maryland needs about

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TURNING BEESWAX INTO ICON CORNER CANDLES

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50 pounds of honey to survive through one of our winters, so I try to make sure they have enough. But, in a good year we can harvest enough honey for personal use.

In the honey harvesting process, the wax is physically cut or scraped off the honey frames by the beekeeper. The wax may be saved until the beekeeper chooses among the many possibilities for how to use it. Over the years, I had saved many freezer bags of scraped wax and had never done anything with them. This year, as we approached the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, also known as Candlemas, I decided to try my hand at converting our wax into pure beeswax candles for our home icon corner.



The beeswax that is removed from the frames during honey harvesting is typically covered in honey residue and other substances common to the inside of a hive. To clean, or “render” the wax into a useable form, it is necessary to melt the wax down and filter it. In my case, after watching many YouTube videos, I decided to purchase a Crock Pot to melt the dirty wax down. First, a small quantity of water is put in the Crock Pot. When the water gets hot, the dirty wax is placed in the pot. Over time, the wax completely melts, floats on top of the water and is ready to be filtered. I used cheese cloth as a filter and a heavy-duty plastic bucket to pour the liquid wax into.

Wax cappings are removed from a frame of honey and preserved for later use.



After the rendering process is complete, the finished product is beautiful. This is three pounds of clean beeswax.

Once the wax hardens, the whole wax melting process needs to be redone to get the wax as pure as possible to facilitate the candle burning cleanly. In my case, the finished wax was beautiful and there was every temptation to simply

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TURNING BEESWAX INTO ICON CORNER CANDLES

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Poured wax inside candle mold, after hardening.

display it in the house as a beekeeping trophy! Nevertheless, what I really wanted to do was make our own beeswax candles for our icon corner. Generally, beeswax candles are made either through hand dipping or using molds.

I opted to use molds to produce our icon corner candles. To produce the candles, the pure wax needs to be re-melted. The specific molds that I used are designed to allow the wick to be ran up the entirety of the mold. Once the wax is melted, it can be poured into the mold. In less than an hour, the wax hardens inside the mold and the beekeeper has a beautiful and pure candle.

I love the complete symmetry of the process of making pure beeswax candles. The bees take the nectar that God provides them through the tree blooms and flowers, they turn it into honey and then wax, which we use to make beautiful candles to offer back to God in prayer

Winter is candle making season amongst beekeepers. It is timely, appropriate, and significant that it occurs at about the same time as the Presentation of our Lord in the Temple, when candles are blessed for the upcoming Church year.



Pictured Left: Finished beeswax candle being used in our icon corner. The color of the candle is determined by how clean the original was.

A VISIT FROM ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN

On the Sunday of Orthodoxy March 13th, 2022, we celebrated a Hierarchal Divine Liturgy with His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin. His Eminence is the archpastor of the Orthodox Church in America's Diocese of the West — a position of oversight for a diocese comprised of more than 50 parishes in California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Arizona, and Montana. His Eminence arrived to the Washington D.C. area early for the Holy Synod meetings that took place throughout the following week.

We were honored to have His Eminence give the homily during Liturgy. It's transcript can be found on the following pages.

It was a great blessing and joy for us to host His Eminence. May God grant him many years! Eis Polla Eti Despota!



SERMON SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 2022

Archbishop Benjamin

Today we celebrate the restoration of the Holy Images, the icons in the Orthodox Church. We do so at the time of the year when the Church, our mother, calls us to renew the image of Christ within ourselves through prayer, fasting, and acts of charity toward our neighbors. Central to this entire enterprise is our understanding that Christ Jesus is not only the perfect image of the father wrapped in our humanity, but he is also the image of the perfect human being. He is what and who our father Adam was and we have been called to be. We might also say the spiritual life is nothing less than the process of growing in the likeness of Christ becoming increasingly like him.

On Tuesday of the First Week of the Great Fast at Compline, we hear these words of St. Andrew of Crete:

I have discolored with the passions the first beauty of the image O Savior. But, seek me, as once Thou hast sought the lost coin, and find me.

These two very brief lines from the Great Kanon, reflect two fundamental principles and our Orthodox understanding of the divine economy: 1) our father, Adam, and we his children were created in the image and likeness of God; And 2) and it is God himself who searches for us, reaching down from heaven, as it were, to lift us up.

As I get older, I find myself turning again and again to the first chapters of Genesis and realizing how important they are and understanding what is to be found in the rest of the Bible. We read that God brought all of creation into being on the first five days through a word. The formula: “And God said, Let there be... and it was so” repeated five times. But on the sixth day, when God creates Adam, the man, the entire grammar changes. God says



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SERMON SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 2022

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these very significant words: “Let us make man according to our image and likeness...” and, continuing: “And God made man, according to the image of God he made him, male and female, he made them.” (Gen. 1:26 – 27).

Clearly, from the text, there is something different about the man. He is the only of God’s creatures made in his image and likeness. No other animal, fish or bird is created specifically to reflect God. And, this divine likeness is something possessed by both males and females. Expressed another way, human beings were created to be living images or icons of God, animate reflections in flesh of God Himself, having dominion over God’s creation.

The story of Adam and Eve continues. The man and the woman were placed by God in what the Septuagint calls “the Garden of Delight” and were to cultivate it and keep it. And they were given the freedom to eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden except one, the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Its presence in the garden and their observance of this one commandment of God is an expression of Adam and Eve’s freedom, their ability to choose, to obey or disobey. It also represents our own ability to choose, to obey God or to disobey Him. It is important for us to understand the man and the woman, and those of us who call ourselves Christians, obey God’s commandments, not because we are afraid He will somehow torment us or punish us if we do not, but because we love Him and we want to please Him. Love, even love of God, is something that cannot be compelled or demanded, it can only be freely given. And then, if you will, this primal fast was a simple and yet fundamental expression of our first parents’ love for God. Genesis expresses the innocence and freedom of Adam and Eve in a unique way: “And the two were naked, both Adam and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

But, as we all know, that first fast was broken through the guile of the serpent. And when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam and Eve hid themselves, it is written, because they were afraid and knew that they were naked. In eating of the fruit of the tree that was forbidden to them, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve indeed gained knowledge. They learned that they were now separated from God and had lost the closeness to Him they once possessed. Made both in the image and likeness of God, they were no longer “like” God. Their likeness to Him was darkened through sin and they lamented, not just their loss of Paradise, but much more how they had grieved and offended God’s love. And, the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil taught them one more thing. They knew shame and hid themselves from the loving Lord who had only shown them friendship and kindness. They lost their intimacy with God and became afraid. Through sin, the image of God within the man and the woman, indeed in each of us, is obscured and our likeness to him diminished, sullied and masked.

On this Sunday when we celebrate the restoration of the holy icons to the Church, we are reminded of our need to restore the image of God within each of us. One could say the spiritual life and our Lenten journey, the lifelong struggle to repent is all about the restoration and cleaning of that original image within each of us, about making ourselves, transparent, so to speak, so that God can once more shine through men and women into this world. Are not the saints those men and women who have, in their lives, removed all that is not God-like in them and in whom the image and likeness have been restored to the point that God can be encountered in them once more.

Great Lent has been called “the school of repentance.” And schools are about education. I think it is interesting to note the Russian word for education is obrazovanie, which has its root in the word obraz which can mean icon or image. It is as though there is some basic understanding that education involves more than the transfer of information from one person to another. Real education entails the development or nurturing of an image of one sort

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or another. In a spiritual sense, this is exactly what our journey to Pascha is all about.

The Lenten “school of repentance” is nothing less than the restoration of the image of God in us, an uncovering of what in us is really human. It is a rededication to our primal calling in the Garden to be the friends of God.

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom once pointed out our tendency during the time of the fast to dwell on all that is wrong in ourselves, all that makes us prodigals, and obscures the divine image within us. To be sure, it is necessary to come to terms with our distance from God in our process of repentance. But it is not the entire story, only the first step.

When a specialist in art restoration looks at a damaged painting, he has first to make assessment of the damage that has been done to it. What did it look like originally? Where are the cracks? Are there tears in the canvas? What is the state of the varnish? How much dirt and grime is there, obscuring the image? But, if we were to stop there, the painting would remain a piece of damaged art, no better.

We cannot be renewed if we only concentrate on the damage we have done to the image of God within us. If we if all we do is catalog what is unworthy, dead and sinful in us, and dwell on it, are we any better? We must allow the Master, the One who is the author of the image to bring life and healing to our souls. The Lenten effort then is also, and perhaps even mainly, about a search for the divine beauty that is within us.

Those who restore paintings have their tools and techniques. And the Church has also given us tools we can use to restore the image of Christ within us, to help us become more like him: prayer, fasting, confession and almsgiving. We need to understand them to be what they are: tools. They are not the goal but the means by which we can achieve our goal. And, as tools, they are applied to the whole human person: soul and body. Let us not be shy or slow about taking them up.

Adam and Eve, you and I were created to be the objects of God’s incomprehensible love. Remember, an image makes the prototype present. We were lovingly fashioned in his image and likeness and placed here on this earth to make God present in his beloved Creation. Let us make the rest of our Lenten journey and effort to comprehend in even the smallest way how dear we are to God, how much He cherishes and desires each one of us. There is not one person here or even on this earth that is without value and not sought by God’s love. But, equally, there is not one of us who has “arrived.” We are all either moving toward the One Who loves us or away from Him. We are all either in the process of restoring the image of God within us, or likeness to him, or we are actively engaged in marring it.

Let us also not forget that God is constantly searching for us. I love the story of the Prodigal Son. I imagine the father of that wretched boy going out each day and looking down the road for the return of his beloved child. And when at last he saw him returning home, he ran and embraced him with tears of joy. Let this be our image of repentance as we set about to restore our likeness to God.

I would like to close with these words of Metropolitan Anthony:

“Stand with a clear vision of our wonderful vocation, of the love of God, of what we mean to Him, because His power is made visible through weakness. He requires not our strength but our surrender.”

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 2022

Photos by Victor Lutes

On the Sunday, March 13th, 2022, St. Mark had the honor of hosting the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers service!



Photo by Debbi Dillon



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SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 2022

Photos by Victor Lutes



HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS

Photos by Victor Lutes & Fr. Gregory Safchuk

On Tuesday March 15th, 2022, St. Mark had the honor of hosting the Holy Synod of Bishops.

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, meeting in their Regular Spring 2022 Session under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, canonically elected His Grace Bishop Alexis, formerly Bishop of Bethesda and Auxiliary to the Metropolitan for Stravropegial Institutions, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska.

Many many thanks to all those that came out to help host the Holy Synod.

Many years to His Grace, Bishop Alexis, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska!



AXIOS!

Photos by Mka. Ann Prentice

Congratulations to Michael Mihailov who was tonsured a reader by His Grace Bishop Alexis, formerly Bishop of Bethesda, on Sunday March 20th, 2022.



A LENTEN RECIPE

Some of you may have had the soup that Sarah Borger brought to the first Presanctified Liturgy and Lenten Lecture on March 9th. If you were lucky enough to grab some before it disappeared, you know just how delicious it was! Sarah says that the Church family lovingly calls this “Orange Soup.” Sarah also suggests to swap out the water for veggie stock (or add a spoonful of Better than Boullion.) Here is the recipe for all to enjoy and thank you, Sarah, for sharing!

Curried Lentil, Tomato, and Coconut Soup

by YOTAM OTTOLENGHI

Ingredients

2 tablespoons virgin coconut oil or extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 (2 1/2”) piece ginger, peeled, finely grated
1 tablespoon medium curry powder (such as S&B)
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
3/4 cup red lentils
1 (14.5-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
1/2 cup finely chopped cilantro, plus leaves with tender stems for serving
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
1 (13.5-ounce) can unsweetened coconut milk, shaken well
Lime wedges (for serving)



Instructions

Step 1

Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium. Cook onion, stirring often, until softened and golden brown, 8–10 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, curry powder, and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add lentils and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add tomatoes, 1/2 cup cilantro, a generous pinch of salt, and 2 1/2 cups water; season with pepper. Set aside 1/4 cup coconut milk for serving and add remaining coconut milk to saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, until lentils are soft but not mushy, 20–25 minutes. Season soup with more salt and pepper if needed.

Step 2

To serve, divide soup among bowls. Drizzle with reserved coconut milk and top with more cilantro. Serve with lime wedges.

Do Ahead

Step 3

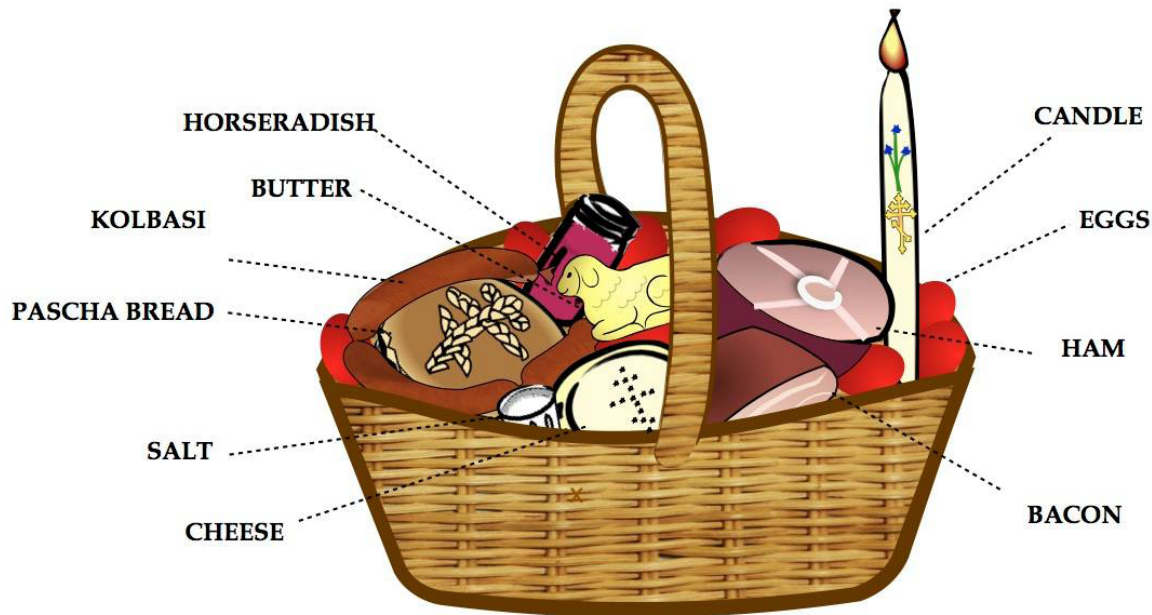
Soup (without toppings) can be made 3 days ahead. Let cool; cover and chill.

Recipe and photo from epicurious.com: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/curried-lentil-tomato-and-coconut-soup>

EASTER BASKET

HOW TO PUT TOGETHER A TRADITIONAL EASTER BASKET

"TEXT ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY FR. BASIL KRAYNYAK, GCU MESSENGER, APRIL, 1979" ILLUSTRATED BY FR. JONATHAN BANNON



PASCHA - The Easter Bread (Pron. Pa-ska.) A sweet yeast bread rich in eggs, butter, etc. Symbolic of Christ Himself who is our True Bread. Usually round loaf baked with a golden crust decorated with a symbol indicative of Christ. Sometimes a cross (+) of dough is placed on top encircled by a plait given it a crowned effect or Greek

CHEESE - (Rusyn: Hrudka or Sirec) A custard type cheese shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. Also creamed cheese is placed in a small dish and both are decorated with symbols (see Pascha) out of cloves or pepper balls.



HAM - (Rusyn: Šunka - pron. shoon-ka.) The Flesh meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolic of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer Lamb or Veal. This is usually well roasted or cooked as well as other meats so the festivity of the day will not be burdened with preparation and all may enjoy the Feast.

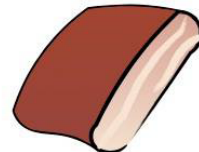


BUTTER - (Rusyn: Maslo pron. ma-slo.) This favorite dairy product is often shaped into a figure of a Lamb or small cross and decorated as the cheese. This reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things.

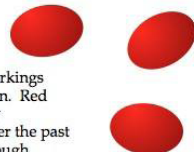


SAUSAGE (Rusyn: Kolbasi-pron. kol-bus-i.) A spicy, garlic sausage of pork products indicative of God's flavor and generosity.

BACON - (Rusyn: Slanina pron. sla-ni-na) A piece of uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the overabundance of God's mercy to us.



EGGS (Rusyn: Pisanki pron. pi-sun-ki) Hardboiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and markings made with beeswax, indicative of new life and resurrection. Red eggs are also traditional date back to a story with St. Mary Magdalene. Having been dyed with onion skins saved over the past year, red shows the color of life and victory that came through Christ's blood.



SALT - (Rusyn: Sol' pron. sol') A condiment necessary for flavor reminding the Christian of his duty to others.



HORSERADISH (Rusyn: Chrin pron. khrin) Horseradish mixed with grated red beets (optional) symbolizes the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bitter-sweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.

These articles are placed in a wicker basket. A decorated candle is placed inside and is lit at the time of the blessing. A linen cover usually embroidered with a picture of the Risen Christ or symbol with the words "Christ is Risen" is placed over the food when brought to the Church.

In some places a large Easter Bread (Pascha) is made and brought separately in a large linen cloth. If the origin of the people was from a wine growing area, a sweet wine may be brought

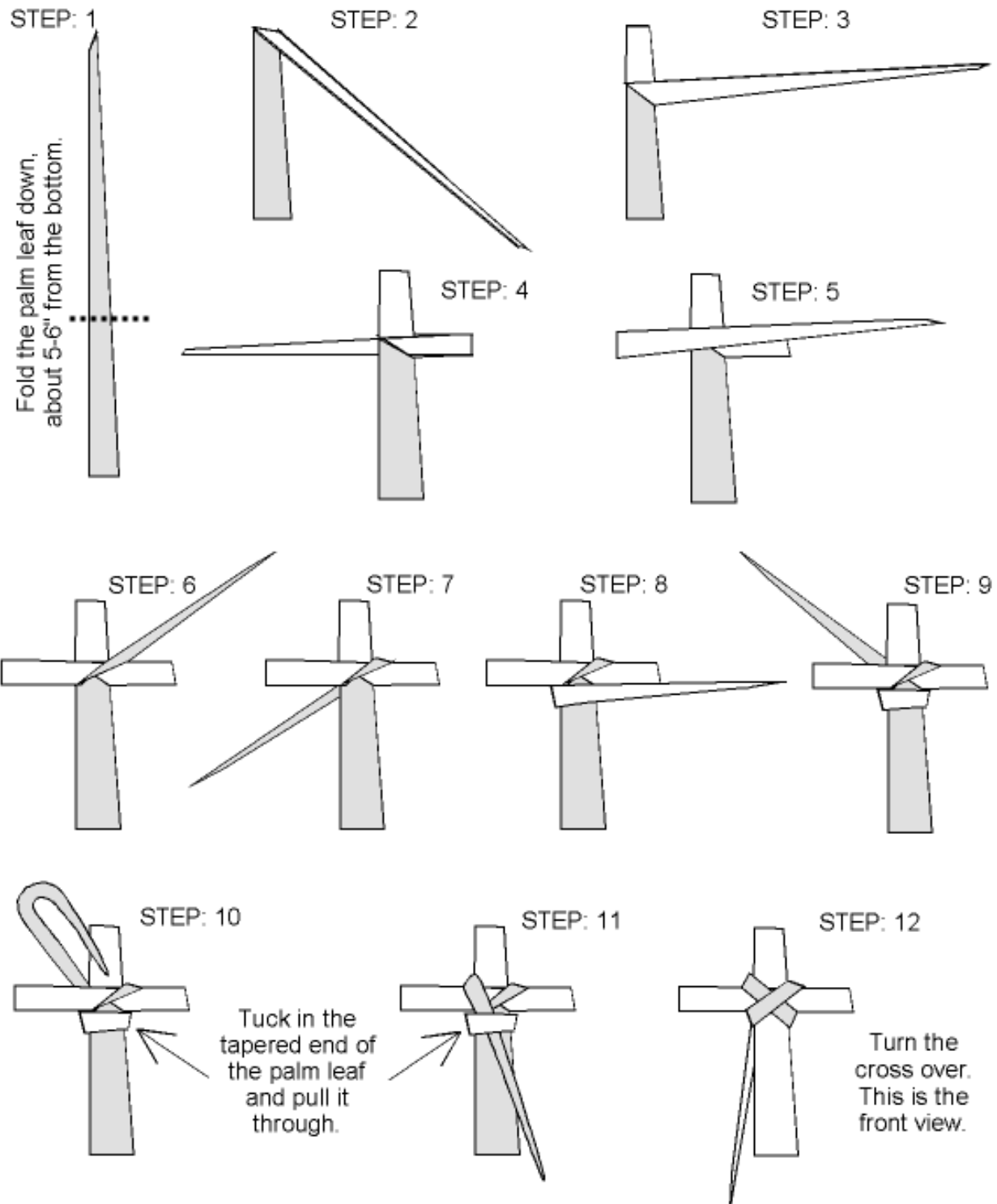


PALM CROSS

No palm fronds available? No problem! Cut strips of paper to the dimensions listed below!

Palm Leaf Cross Directions

Supplies: One palm leaf strip about 24-26" in length, 1/2" in width, tapering to the end.



NEWS & NOTES

THE DOCTOR IS IN!: Former parishioner and friend of St. Mark, Dr. Doug Pierce, has shared his most recent musical compositions with us! Dr. Pierce has taken inspiration from hymns in the church as well as Fr. Thomas Hopko, of blessed memory. Check out more of his work on his YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2VI9vWXZq4MjHMXXMrOdyg>. Thank you for sharing your talent with us Doctor!

2022 TOMATO SEEDLING SALE: Don & Jan Truitt plan to make approximately three dozen tomato seedlings available for sale at St. Mark with a target date of Mother's Day, God willing. The tomatoes varieties will be almost entirely heirlooms, from which seed may be saved for use in future years. Many past favorites are planned, as well as a few varieties that Don has not previously grown. They will include beefsteak, mid-sized, cherry and dwarf varieties. The dwarf varieties are perfect for someone with limited space on a deck, patio, or drive way and who wants to grow plants in containers or grow bags. They combine the great flavor of classic heirlooms, produce fruit almost all season long, and stand no more than three or four feet tall. Anything collected will be for the benefit of St. Mark.

LENTEN LECTURES: Did you miss a lecture? Or maybe you want to watch it again? All of this year's Lenten Lectures are available to watch on our YouTube Channel! [tps://www.youtube.com/saintmarkorthodoxchurch](https://www.youtube.com/saintmarkorthodoxchurch)

KNOWING ST. NICHOLAI: John Sokich's mother, Protinicia Olga Sokich, was a guest speaker at St. Tikhon's Seminary on Wednesday, March 15th. Very few people know and worked with the now-canonized Saint Nicholai. Hear Protinicia Olga share personal stories about life with St Nicholai and her husband, Fr Dragolyub, who served as Secretary to St. Nicholai in New York from 1950-56. St Nicholai taught Theology and Homiletics at St Tikhon's and served as Seminary Rector from 1955-56. Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsfojOK1uvg>.



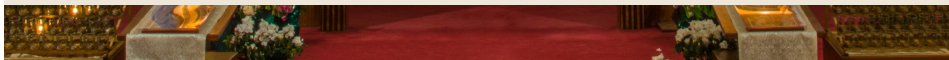
NEWS & NOTES



WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU JOIN US!

ST. MARK 50TH ANNIVERSARY

September 17-18, 2022
Details to follow



Bells have arrived at St. Mark!





UPCOMING EVENTS

GROCERY CARDS

Please consider donating grocery cards for the needy all, and especially, through-out Lent! Please see Father Gregory or Kyra Smerkanich for questions or donations. Thank you!!

AMAZON SMILE: Do you use the Amazon App? Do you have us as your charity for Amazon Smile? Well now you can! See the instructions below for adding St. Mark as your charity for Amazon Smile!

AmazonSmile customers can now support St Mark Orthodox Church in the Amazon shopping app on iOS and Android mobile phones! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings'
3. Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process

Make sure you have the latest version of the Amazon App!

ST. MARK YOUTUBE CHANNEL: <https://www.youtube.com/saintmarkorthodoxchurch>

WOMEN' BOOK DISCUSSION: The Women's Book Group continues to meet via Zoom. Please watch the bulletin and emails for announcement of the next meeting. We will continue to discuss *Women of the Bible Speak* by Shannon Bream. If you'd like to join the discussion please contact either Matushka Alexandra (asafchuk@hotmail.com) or Marcella Hydock (vze5847i@verizon.net).

BLESSED MAT. OLGA OF ALASKA WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP

We have resumed meeting in person for intercessory prayer. We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month @ 10:30 a.m. in the church nave. We no longer do a hybrid version for intercessory prayer.

We continue to do a hybrid version on the 3rd Tuesday of the month @10:30 a.m. to pray an Akathist. A link for the Akathist is usually sent the day before.

Please join us if you can. To update the intercessory prayer list please contact Debbi Dillon at debbi.dillon@gmail.com We thank you for prayers on our behalf. Holy Mother Olga, Pray to God for us!



Intercessory Prayer Dates & Times:

- TUESDAY, APRIL 5th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, MAY 3rd, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, JUNE 7th, 10:30 AM

Akathist Dates & Times:

- TUESDAY, APRIL 19th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, MAY 17th, 10:30 AM
- TUESDAY, JUNE 21st, 10:30 AM

UPDATER

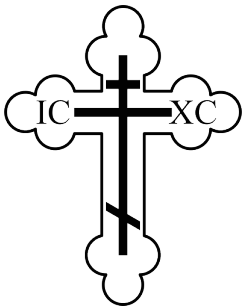
Births



3/2/22 - Theodore James Popsuy



Chrismations



2/20/22 - David Burpee

May God Grant Them Many Years!



Memory Eternal!

Deaths

1/25/22 - Mircea, cousin of Michael Lungociu

3/16/22 - Pdn. Sergius Miller

3/24/22 - Charlotte Knight Carrasco, Mother of Doug Dillon

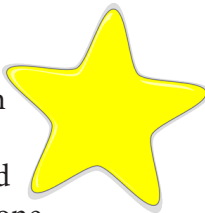


May Their Memory Be Eternal!

Happy Birthday!

April

1 Gherman Uritsky
 2 Jack Albert
 Elizabeth Cannon
 Elianna Niemi
 4 Alexis Pearce
 Jessica Herrera
 Paulina Masick
 5 Barbara Kreta
 Faith Skordinski
 6 Mary Mytryshyn
 7 Nathaniel Safchuk
 Irene Tarpy
 8 Darlene Marti
 10 Martin Riskam
 Don Truitt
 Aaron Wickard
 11 Melanie Firestone
 12 Eric Williams
 15 Christopher Safchuk
 16 Sophia Nimmer
 18 Nina Uritsky
 19 Ashley Albert
 20 Mary Rudin
 21 Doug Burns
 Anastacia (Stacy) Jacobsen
 23 Lori Landsburg
 Chloe Emerson Little
 Kiprian Tatusko
 24 Susan B. Petro
 25 Sasha Lutes
 26 Peter Truitt
 27 Dorothy Gumpert
 Sarah Jenkins-Petro
 Justin Markovich
 29 Sarah Hardy
 Tristan Pearson
 30 Marge Dove
 Justin Humphries



May

1 John Michael Mikuluk
 2 Susan Rodak
 3 Manuella Buzoianu Balan
 7 Colleen Church
 Lily Church
 Madeleine Voth
 Nicholas Voth
 8 Olga Lobas
 Patricia Pearson
 9 Michael Karas
 10 Grace Dillon
 12 Paul Antich
 Shirley Dean
 Joanna Williams
 13 Ellen Barber
 14 Alexander Norton
 Bella Prose
 15 Bennett Barber
 Antonina Riscuta
 16 Alexandra Brasoveanu-Tarpy
 Dorothy Dillon
 17 Sherry Safchuk
 19 Carol Mary Ashley
 Stephen Ilario
 21 Coy Williamson
 22 Simina Lal Ciubotaru
 Renee Zabela
 Dominic Rotunda
 23 Kenneth Bernstein
 Carl Firestone
 Cindy Jefferson
 24 Nicholas Paul Moser
 25 Talia Sieff
 26 Christina Berencz
 Andrew Bumbak
 27 Timothy Firestone
 Fr. Mark Koczak
 28 Shawn Niemi
 29 Henry William Meyers
 Lisa Robinson
 Patricia Prose
 Michelle Bahumian
 Hannah LeFors
 Alexandra Sedor



June

1 Alexandra Zabela
 3 Christine Cacic
 5 Michael Cacic
 Rachael Datch
 6 Robert Rudin
 7 James W. (Skip) Mersereau
 9 Simon Markovich
 10 Nicholas Niemi
 11 Mat. Gemma Phelps
 12 Nicholas Corbin
 Eliot Landsburg
 13 David Burke Jackson
 Ann Marie Steger
 Vadim Uritsky
 14 Maximus Timothy Masick
 Michael McDonald
 Daniel Schuresko
 15 Tina Burpee
 Mary Ann Holovac
 John Humphries
 Alexandra Kissell
 16 Fr. David Cowan
 Wright Steinberg
 Kara Walker
 18 Kathryn Balamaci
 19 David Jefferson
 Rachel Salas
 20 Karen Jankovic
 21 Kimberly Yakubik
 22 Salomea Jankovic
 Peter Sielinski
 23 Timothy Dillon
 Michael Hydock
 Timothy Perry
 24 Benjamin Oleynik
 Joshua Tucker
 25 Harell Little
 Tara Shimer
 26 Nicola Ilario
 27 Dawn Little
 30 Ella Rose Datch
 Jenna Datch
 Nick Pedersen

