



Saint Mark Orthodox Church

Archdiocese of Washington DC – Orthodox Church in America

Semi-Annual Parish Meeting – Sunday, May 15, 2022

Pastoral Address

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen!

I am grateful to God for His blessings upon us thus far in this, our 50th. year. We experienced a wonderfully busy and spiritually fruitful Lenten journey, followed by a prayerful and inspiring Holy Week culminating in a joyous Pascha here at St. Mark.

Through the hearing of many confessions, I feel that I drew closer to you, my beloved flock, during this time of bright sadness. Echoing Wayne Tatusko's report, I grieve the loss of some of our parishioners and simultaneously rejoice in the reception of our new members. It was a particular joy to receive David Burpee in February and the Lewis family (Cameron, Amy, Adele and Charlie), Ryan Jefferson, and Nicholas Nelson on Great and Holy Saturday. Please keep them and our remaining catechumens in your prayers.

I agree with the many people (some new to St. Mark) who commented to me that our choir did an outstanding job singing the responses for the many services during Lent, Holy Week and Pascha. Attendance was so much better than during the times of Covid restrictions for most services. Plus, viewership on YouTube was also up.

Thank you to all those who helped with the myriad of details making our church and worship so beautiful! There are countless ways in which people help in this regard, many quietly, whose identities are known only to God. In particular, I'd also like to thank our church school teachers, students and families for their efforts to further the understanding and practice of our faith. The inaugural young parents "Date Night", festal workshops and lectures have all been well received and appreciated.

As we return to greater normalcy in our parish life reintroducing aspects that were put on hold for the past two years, I welcome any new ideas that may serve to enhance our parish social and community life.

I look forward to completing some of the improvement projects we are planning including:

- * Iconography
- * Bell installation
- * New Pews
- * New Carpeting

I thank all of you who have contributed to these and all other needs in our parish life and look forward to celebrating our parish 50th Anniversary in September!

In the Risen Lord,
Fr. Gregory