

SCHEDULE FOR CATECHUMENS

For those desiring to become Orthodox Christians in 2024

(Father Steve *must* be informed of your intentions no later than Wednesday, March 6th)

March-May 2024

Sunday, March 10th

At the end of the Liturgy, all those desiring to be baptized and/or chrismated at *Pascha* will gather in the narthex (the back of the Church).

Father Steve will come to the narthex and pray *The Service for the Making of a Catechumen*, during which you will be asked to renounce Satan, to join Christ and confess, as *your* faith, the Nicene Creed. You will be led from the back of the Church to the front, up onto the marble of the *solea*, where you will be blessed for a final time, introduced to the congregation, and asked to kiss the Cross before returning to the pews.

Sunday, March 17th

At the end of the Liturgy a special service of reconciliation called the *Vespers of Forgiveness* will be prayed. During this service, everyone in the congregation that morning will ask forgiveness of their sins from everyone else as a sign of the forgiveness offered to us in Christ Jesus (*Ephesians 4:32*). This is traditionally how we as Orthodox Christians begin Great Lent, that special period of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in preparation for our celebration of *Pascha* (literally, Passover) or Easter.

Great Lent begins on Pure Monday, March 18th this year!

Sunday, March 24th – Sunday, April 28th

On each of these six Sundays, following the reading of the Gospel during the Liturgy, all catechumens will be called up to the front of the Church – to the *solea* – in order to be prayed for by the entire congregation and prayed over by Father Steve.

It is imperative that catechumens be present each Sunday for this special service of prayer!

Great and Holy Saturday, May 4th

Today, those who need to be baptized will be baptized (and chrismated at the same time) in the early afternoon, about 1PM, following the 10AM Liturgy of Holy Saturday.

Those who have already been baptized in another Christian community in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as the Lord Jesus commands at the end of the Gospel of Matthew (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, etc.) will be chrismated that evening, just prior to the 10PM Resurrection service (at about 9:30PM). *You must be at Church no later than 9PM this evening!*

Everyone, whether baptized and/or chrismated, will receive their first Communion in the Body and Blood of Jesus with their sponsors at the Resurrection Liturgy which follows.

The Great and Holy Sunday of *Pascha*, May 5th

Plan to attend the *Vespers of Love* service that begins at 12 NOON during which the Gospel is read in 12 different languages to show the universality of the message of Christ.

After the service, our annual Easter picnic begins. All those who are newly baptized and/or chrismated will report to the kitchen in the parish hall in order to assist in the serving of dinners during the Easter picnic.

In addition, those intending to become Orthodox believers on *Pascha*, 2024 must also:

- + make an appointment with Father Steve for confession during Lent.
- + choose an Orthodox sponsor (Godparent).
- + choose a Christian name if one's name is not that of a saint of the Church, or have Christian roots.
- + become a steward of St. Paul's parish.