THE GOOD NEWS

Saint Paul's Greek Orthodox Church - Monthly Bulletin

"I am not ashamed of the Good News because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." *(Romans 1:16)* April, 2024



CHRIST THE BRIDEGROOM *is celebrated the first three nights of Holy Week Sunday thru Tuesday Evenings, April 28th - 30th*

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday Morning Prayer 8:30am Divine Liturgy 9:30am



Special Lenten Services in April

Mondays Great Compline 6pm

Wednesdays Pre-sanctified Liturgy 6pm

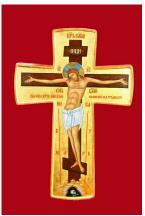
Fridays Salutations to the Theotokos 7pm

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Saturday, April 27th The Saturday of Lazarus Morning Prayer 9am Divine Liturgy 10am



For a listing of Holy Week Services please turn to pp. 20-21



Saint Paul's Greek Orthodox Church

4949 Alton Parkway, Irvine, California 92604-8606 Office Hours: 9am-5pm Monday-Friday Office Telephone: (949) 733-2366

http://www.stpaulsirvine.org

Father Steven Tsichlis, Pastor — Father Theofanis J. Degaitas, Assistant Priest Deacon Daniel Cunningham, Parish Deacon — Dean Langis, Pastoral Assistant Carolyn Kouracos, Office Administrator — Denise Oller, Office Assistant Alex Gorbenko, Facilities Operations Manager



The True Nature of Fasting

by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

Before the festival of Easter there has developed a long preparatory season of repentance and fasting called Great Lent, extending in present Orthodox usage over ten weeks. First come twenty-two days (four successive Sundays) of preliminary observance; then the six weeks or forty days of the Great Fast of Lent; and finally Holy Week, Balancing the seven weeks of Lent and Holy Week, there



follows after Easter a corresponding season of fifty days of thanksgiving, concluding with Pentecost.

Christians prepare themselves for the celebration of the New Passover in Christ by observing a fast. But what is meant by this word fast? Here the utmost care is needed, so as to preserve a proper balance between the outward and the inward. On the outward level fasting involves physical abstinence from food and drink, and without such exterior abstinence a full and true fast cannot be kept; yet the rules about eating and drinking must never be treated as an end in themselves, for ascetic fasting has always an inward and unseen purpose. Man is a unity of body and soul; and our ascetic fasting should therefore involve both these natures at once. The tendency to overemphasize external rules about food in a legalistic way, and the opposite tendency to scorn these rules as outdated and unnecessary, are both

alike to be deplored as a betrayal of true Orthodoxy. In both cases the proper balance between the outward and the inward has been impaired.

The second tendency is doubtless the more prevalent in our own day. One reason for this decline in fasting is surely a heretical attitude towards human nature, a false 'spiritualism' which rejects or ignores the body, viewing man solely in terms of his reasoning brain. As a result, many contemporary Christians have lost a true vision of man as an integral unity of body and soul; they neglect the positive role played by the body in the spiritual life, forgetting St. Paul's affirmation: 'Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. . . . glorify God with your body' (*I Corinthians 6:19-20*). Another reason for the decline in fasting among Orthodox is the argument, commonly advanced in our times, that the traditional rules are no longer possible today. These rules presuppose, so it is urged, a closely organized, non-pluralistic Christian society, following an agricultural way of life that is now increasingly a thing of the past. There is a measure of truth in this. But it needs also to be said that fasting, as traditionally practiced in the Church, has always been difficult and has always involved hardship. Many of our contemporaries are willing to fast for reasons of health or beauty, in order to lose weight; cannot we Christians do as much for the sake of the heavenly Kingdom? Why should the self-denial gladly accepted by previous generations of Orthodox prove such an intolerable burden to their successors today? Once St. Seraphim of Sarov (1754-1833) was asked why the miracles of grace, so abundantly manifest in the past, were no longer apparent in his own day, and to this he replied: 'Only one thing is lacking - a firm resolve.'

The primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God. If practiced seriously, the Lenten abstinence from food - particularly in the opening days - involves a considerable measure of real hunger, and also a feeling of tiredness and physical exhaustion. The purpose of this is to lead us in turn to a sense of inward brokenness and contrition; to bring us, that is, to the point where we appreciate the full force of Christ's statement, **'Without Me you can do nothing'** (John 15: 5). Such is the function of the hunger and the tiredness: to make us 'poor in spirit', aware of our helplessness and of our dependence on God's aid.

Yet it would be misleading to speak only of this element of weariness and hunger. Fasting leads, not merely to this, but also to a sense of lightness, wakefulness, freedom and joy. Even if the fast

THE LORD IS NOT BLASPHEMED AS MUCH BY THE UNCLEAN LIFE OF THE PAGAN, AS HE IS BY THE CORRUPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN.

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

proves debilitating at first, afterwards we find that it enables us to sleep less, to think more clearly, and to work more decisively. As many doctors acknowledge, periodical fasts contribute to bodily hygiene. While involving genuine self-denial, fasting does not seek to do violence to our body but rather to restore it to health and equilibrium. Most of us in the Western world habitually eat more than we need. Fasting liberates our body from the burden of excessive weight and makes it a willing partner in the task of prayer, alert and responsive to the voice of the Spirit.

If it is important not to overlook the physical requirements of fasting, it is even more important not to overlook its inward significance. Fasting is not a mere matter of diet. It is moral as well as physical. *True fasting is to be converted in heart and will; it is to return to God, to come home like the Prodigal Son to our Father's house.* In the words of St. John Chrysostom (349-407AD), it means 'abstinence not only from food but from sins'. 'The fast', he insists, 'should be kept not by

the mouth alone but also by the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands and all the parts of the body': the eye must abstain from impure sights, the ear from malicious gossip, the hands from acts of injustice. It is useless to fast from food, protests St. Basil the Great (329-379AD), and yet to indulge in cruel criticism and slander: 'You do not eat meat, but you devour your brother'. The same point is made in the hymns we sing in Church, especially during the first week of Lent:

As we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. . . Let us observe a fast acceptable and pleasing to the Lord. True fasting is to put away all evil, To control the tongue, to forbear from anger, To abstain from lust, slander, falsehood and perjury. If we renounce these things, then is our fasting true and acceptable to God. Let us keep the Fast not only by refraining from food, But by becoming strangers to all the bodily passions.

The inner significance of fasting is best summed up in the triad: prayer, fasting, almsgiving. Divorced from prayer and from the reception of the holy sacraments, unaccompanied by acts of compassion, our fasting becomes pharisaical or even demonic. It leads, not to contrition and joyfulness, but to pride, inward tension and irritability.

Fasting, then, is valueless or even harmful when not combined with prayer. In the Gospels the devil is cast out, not by fasting alone, but by 'prayer and fasting' (*Matthew 17: 21; Mark 9: 29*); and of the early Christians it is said, not simply that they fasted, but that they 'fasted and prayed' (*Acts 13: 3*). **In both the Old and the New Testament fasting is seen, not as an end in itself, but as an aid to more intense and living prayer, as a preparation for decisive action or for direct encounter with God.** Thus our Lord's forty-day fast in the wilderness was the immediate preparation for His public ministry (*Matthew 4:1-11*). When Moses fasted on Mount Sinai (*Exodus 34:28*) and Elijah on Mount Horeb (*1 Kings 19:8-12*), the fast was in both cases linked with an encounter with the living God. Such is always the purpose of ascetic fasting.

Prayer and fasting should in their turn be accompanied by almsgiving - by love for others expressed in practical form, by works of compassion and forgiveness. Eight days before the opening of the Lenten fast, on the Sunday of the Last Judgment, the appointed Gospel is the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46), reminding us that the criterion in the coming judgment will not be the strictness of our fasting but the amount of help that we have given to those in need. In the words of one of the hymns we sing that day:

Knowing the commandments of the Lord, let this be our way of life: Let us feed the hungry, let us give the thirsty drink, Let us clothe the naked, let us welcome strangers, Let us visit those in prison and the sick. Then the Judge of all the earth will say even to us: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.

Nor is it a coincidence that on the very threshold of the Great Fast, at Vespers on the Sunday of Forgiveness, there is a special ceremony of mutual reconciliation: for without love towards others there can be no genuine fast. And this love for others should not be limited to formal gestures or to sentimental feelings, but should issue in specific acts of almsgiving. Such was the firm conviction of the early Church. The second-century Christian document known as *The Shepherd of Hermas* insists that the money saved through fasting is to be given to the widow, the orphan and the poor. But almsgiving means more than this. It is to give not only our money but our time, not only what we have but what we are; it is to give a part of ourselves. For the mere giving of money can often be a substitute and an evasion, a way of protecting ourselves from closer personal involvement with those in distress. On the other hand, to do nothing more than offer reassuring words of advice to someone crushed by urgent material anxieties is equally an evasion of our responsibilities (*read James 2:16*). The following hymn reminds us of the commandments of the Gospel and our spiritual responsibilities:

While fasting with the body, brethren, let us also fast in spirit. Let us loose every bond of iniquity ; Let us undo the knots of every contract made by violence; Let us tear up all unjust agreements; Let us give bread to the hungry And welcome to our house the poor who have no roof to cover them, That we may receive great mercy from Christ our God.

Lent signifies not winter but spring, not darkness but light, not death but renewed vitality. Certainly the Lenten period has its somber aspect, yet these elements of austerity should not blind us to the fact that **the Lenten fast is not a burden**, **not a punishment**, **but a gift of God's grace**, **given to us for our salvation**. Our Lenten self-denial is our means of entry into the cosmic liturgy of praise whereby all things visible and invisible ascribe glory to their Creator for the beauty of His creation and the gift of His Son.

How <u>NOT</u> to fast during Great Lent!



APRIL LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

Compline

Salutations



Mondays @ 6:00 PM 4/8, 4/15, and 4/22

Wednesdays @ 6:00 PM 4/3, 4/10, 4/17 and 4/24

Fridays @ 7:00 PM 4/5, 4/12 and 4/19

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION DURING LENT

Holy Confession not only benefits us in the obvious way, by granting forgiveness of sins, but it is of the greatest usefulness in shaping an Orthodox phronema. Those who have never confessed or rarely confess their sins to a priest cannot acquire an Orthodox phronema. To reject Holy Confession reveals an attitude of pride, ignorance, and the unwillingness to humble oneself before God. To reject confession is to reject the experience of the saints and the two-thousand-year-old teaching of the Church. How can one acquire the mind of Christ when one rejects this important sacrament? To believe that confession is unnecessary reveals an attitude of arrogance entirely incompatible with an Orthodox phronema.

Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou

Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Christian Mind

#kindlequotes

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all urighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9).

Our Church teaches that Orthodox Christians should participate in the Sacrament of Confession at the very minimum of once a year, preferably three to four times a year during the fasting periods of our Church (Great Lent, Christmas Lent, August Lent, and the Apostles' Fast). Just as we need an annual checkup with our doctor even though we do not feel sick, so we also need to have a regular spiritual checkup for our spiritual health and wellbeing. The Church believes that Confession is a sacrament indispensable for our salvation.

Please make your appointment with Father Steve or Father Theofanis for the Sacrament of Confession by calling the Church Office at 949-733-2366!



MISSION ISPOSSIBLE LENTEN APPEAL

A generous donor has agreed to **match up to \$42,500 for a total of \$85,000** to acquire a truck to mount the new pump hoist rig to repair non-working water wells in Tanzania!



There are over 10,000 non-functioning wells in Tanzania. The cost to repair a non-working well is \$550 to \$750 and typically only takes one day to repair. Repairing wells is a cost/ time effective way to increase access to clean water. The goal for the new pump hoist rig is to repair 70+ wells per year.

Help us meet the match and purchase a truck for the new hoist pump rig and bring clean drinking water to an additional 100,000 people per year. Use the QR Code to make your donation or make checks payable to **St. Paul's** and memo **MIP Lenten Appeal**.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

THE MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY ON THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN MEETS ON MONDAY EVENINGS IN APRIL VIA ZOOM AT 7:30PM!

The *First Letter of St. John* is the simplest and deepest exposition of the Christian faith that exists. Its clarity concerning the Holy Trinity and the Christian life of truth and of love in communion with



God makes it understandable without difficulty to anyone who reads it. It is one of the best places to begin a study of the Christian faith generally, and the Bible in particular. The first letter of St. John proclaims that Jesus is truly "the Christ," the Messiah and Son of God who has come "in the flesh" to the world as "the expiation of our sins, and not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (2:2). Those who believe in Christ and are in communion with Him and His Father have the forgiveness of sins and the possibility not to sin anymore (1:5-2:12). They "walk in the same

> "Be still and know that I am God." - Psalm 46:10

way in which He walked" (2:6) being the "children of God" (3:1, 5:1). They know the truth by the direct inspiration of God through the anointing [*chrisma*] of the Holy Spirit (2:20-26; 6:7). They keep the commandments of God, the first and greatest of which is love, and so they are already recipients of eternal life, already possessing the indwelling of God the Father and Christ the Son "by the Spirit which He has given us" (2:24-3:24).

Taught by Dr. Eve Tibbs, a study of the First Letter of John is a wonderful introduction to the Christian faith. Join us!



Six week class Tuesdays @ 5:30 pm April 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd

Taught by Cherise Matthews

text 949-291-2542 to reserve your spot

Helping people integrate their spiritual, mental, and physical health, using gentle stretching and relaxation techniques while meditating on Christ.

If you have access to, please bring: an exercise mat and 2 yoga blocks

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

THE ORTHODOX KOINONIA BIBLE STUDY ON THE BOOKS OF PSALMS AND PROVERBS AND THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON MEETS ON THURSDAYS AT 7:30 PM!

Please join us on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm for our Bible Study on the beautiful Old Testament Books of Psalms, Proverbs and Wisdom of Solomon. We will be exploring how these books are used



liturgically by our Holy Church and also how these books apply to our day-to-day life as Christians. If you cannot come in person, you may phone in to the Bible Study! According to Fr. Thomas Hopko of blessed memory, "Virtually all states of man's soul before God are found expressed in the Psalms: praising, thanking, blessing, rejoicing, petitioning, repenting, lamenting, questioning and even complaining. . . In the Orthodox Church all of the psalms are understood as having their deepest and most genuine spiritual meaning in terms of Christ and His mission of eternal salvation. . . . The proverbs are short sayings concerning the proper conduct of wise and righteous persons. They are read in their entirety at the weekday

Vesper services of the Church during Great Lent. Selections from the Proverbs [and the Wisdom of Solomon] are also read at the vigils of a number of feasts of the Church since for Christians the Wisdom of God is personified and embodied in Christ." To call in for the Bible Study at St. Paul's all you need to do is to dial **518-992-1141 and then the access code of 835497#**. **Please bring a friend—drop-ins are welcome!**

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THE ANCHORITES ARE A GROUP OF WOMEN WHO PRAY THE PSALMS ONLINE EVERY MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT 9AM!

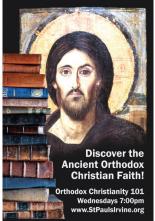
One of the best things to emerge from the pandemic several years ago was The Anchorites, a group of women who gather online via Zoom every Monday through Friday at 9AM to pray through the Book of Psalms for an hour each morning. Additionally, they commemorate the saints of the day and pray for people in the parish and around the world. They have now prayed their way through the Book of Psalms more than 100 times and gain new insights into the Scriptures and themselves each time. The Anchorites carry each other's burdens and have been blessed to experience Christ speaking through the Psalms. *For more information, please contact Diane Elias:* dianeelias@me.com

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ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY 101 MEETS ON WEDNESDAYS IN APRIL AT 7PM!

OC101, taught by Father Steve and Mark Nauroth, meets at 7PM in the Education Building in the Father George Stephanides Library. The purpose of this class is to provide a broad overview of the

Church's faith and life. This month we are wrapping up another year (28 classes, September thru May)! Most recently we've been discussing the spiritual disciplines associated with Great Lent: prayer, fasting and the giving of alms. We've spoken about the importance of fasting and the fact that fasting is not just about food but involves and entire way of living. We've touched on prayer and in particular the Lord's Prayer and the Jesus Prayer as defining who we are as Christians. And finally, we've looked at what it means to be compassionate and merciful. In April, we'll be looking at the monastic witness to the Gospel, talk about life after death—what happens when we die?- and discuss the persecution of the Church through the centuries, culminating in the 20th century, when more Orthodox Christians died for their faith than at any previous time in the Church's 2,000 year history. *And we'll ask the most important question of all: what does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus in 21st century Orange County?* St. Paul's is a good place to explore what it means to be a believer, committed to Christ and living a Spirit-filled life in the context of His



community, the Church. We'll end this year's class on Wednesday, May 8th with a dinner and celebration with all the newly baptized and/or chrismated who've made St. Paul's their home!

PHILOPTOCHOS MEANS "LOVE FOR THE POOR"

Philoptochos Is Giving Back During This Lenten Season!

As part of our ongoing mission to perpetuate Orthodox Christian teachings, our Lenten Retreat, featuring **Rev. Dr. Nicholas Louh** as our speaker, was a <u>great success</u> and had *80 attendees*. I would like to thank our Speaker Series Chair, **Stephanie Miller**, for organizing this fantastic event! Fr. Louh was a captivating speaker and left all who attended praising his "Living A Crucified A Life" presentation.

Also, Philoptochos sponsored the Meatfare Sunday Luncheon with all donations going to Kids 'n' Cancer, our Metropolis Philoptochos charity that provides a free camp experience- Camp Agape- to children with cancer and their families. Kids 'n' Cancer is a charity that exemplifies love for our neighbor and caring for those in need. A special thank you to our special Associate Members who helped our wonderful Chef George **Kookootsedes** in the kitchen to cook the food: Alex Jianas, Chris Louis, and Mitri Manneh. An honorable mention goes to another *Philoptochos* Angel, Dean Conzaman!

Additionally, we have our **Lenten Project** ongoing until April 21st. Please bring donations of canned/boxed food items for collection in the Parish Hall. These donations will go to **Families Forward** to help with their food pantry needs to feed the hungry in Orange County. Last but not least, we have begun sales for our **Palm Sunday Bake**



the Large Bins In

the Parish Hall

Thank You For

Your Generosity!

MARCH 10-APRIL 21 ST. PAUL'S PHILOPTOCHOS LENTEN PROJECT

Bring Your Donations for Families Forward

Join us in making a difference by donating to this Food Drive! Let's help those in need and make sure struggling families have access to these items

Sale and have delicious handmade pastries for all to enjoy during Pascha- order by April 21st!!



Our Membership Drive is ongoing...Please remember to sign up online, or in person at Church at the *Philoptochos* table after Liturgy, to *renew* your 2024 membership. **Never been a member??** Now is the time to join and be a part of *Philoptochos*.

We are working hard to help those in need so they can thrive- join us to help make a difference in others' lives!

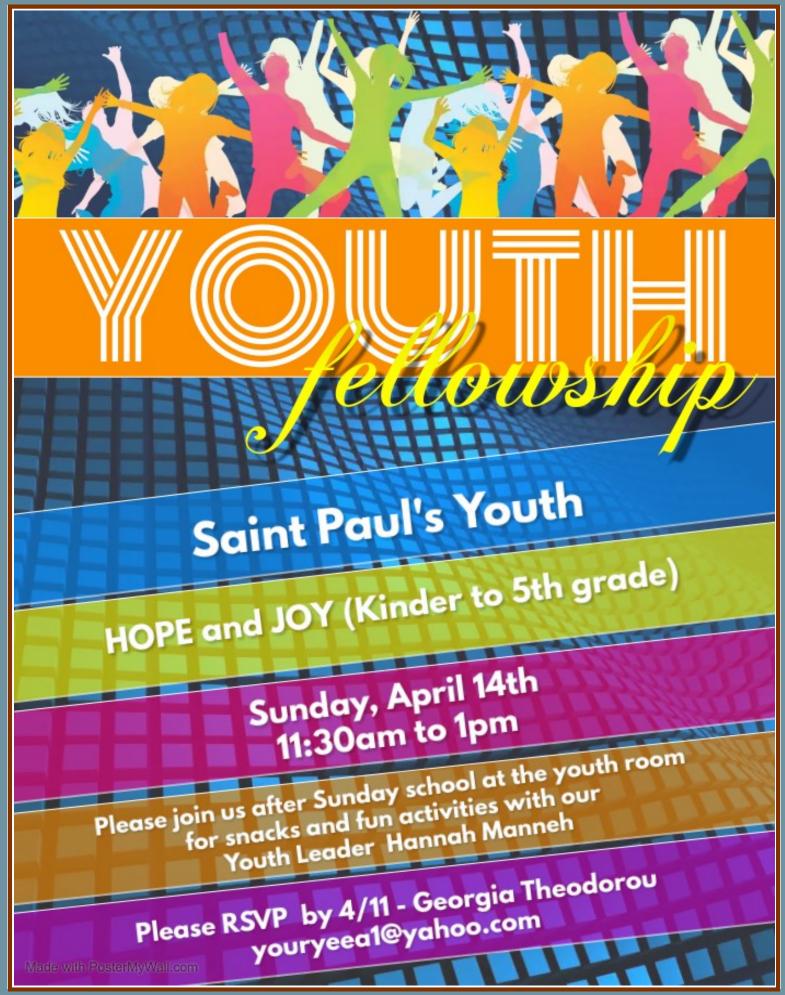
In His Service,

Príscílla Tedesco

President, St Paul's Philoptochos Society



| st. paul's philop Polm Sur Bake sal | e e | The proceeding of the second s |
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| Pre-Order Deadline: Sunday, Ap | oril 21 Pick Up : Sund | day, April 28 |
| \$13 per dozen <u>Koulourakia</u> <u>\$13/dz</u> | QUANTITY | PRICE |
| \$15 per dozen <u>Kourambiethes</u> <u>\$15/dz</u> | | |
| \$30 per dozen \$30/dz | | |
| \$15 Per loaf \$15/loaf With Mastika |] Without Mastika | |
| \$3 Red Egg Dye \$3/packet \$3/packet Name: | TOTAL: | |
| Email: Phone: | | |
| Order Online at www.stpaulsirvine.org Please make check payable to St. Paul pre-order form to: 4949 Alton Parkway, I For Questions Contact: Rama Debbaneh at 949-293-29 | 's Philoptochos and retu rvine California 92604 | |



HUNGER STRIKE APRIL 20&21 2024 APRIL 20&1 LENTEN YOUTH RETREAT

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HUNGER STRIKE \$10,000 MATCHING FUND CHALLENGE







Only \$30



ELP US HELP THEM. HUNGER STRIKE IS RAISING FUNDS TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS TO DESERVING STUDENTS AND RESTORE NON-FUNCTIONING WELLS IN TANZANIA.

STPAULSIRVINE.ORG/HUNGERSTRIKE/DONATE

St. Paul's Young Adult League

Get to know other Young Adults!

Event Details and RSVP Instagram and Calendar Plants & Pillars WhatsApp General Info + More



Lenten Book Club Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives Sunday the 7th, 14th, & 21st 11:45-12:30pm St. Paul's Fireside Room

Basketball & Bible Study

Sunday the 7th & 21st 12-2:30pm St. Paul's Gym

Young Adult Movie Night

The Shepherd's Supper Friday the 26th Time TBD|St. Paul's Fireside Room

Fueled by Telos

Our Planning Committee: Kevin & Maria Gallagher, Kenny Jenkins, Eleni Katelari, Cassiani Kateyiannis, Selene Lawrence, Claire Pearson, Ben Rausch, and Spiro Sun

ST. PAUL'S GOYA Youth Bible Study

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024 | 6:00 PM ST. PAUL'S FIRESIDE ROOM

from Ruin to Redemption

WITH ATHANASIOS OLUTADE & HANNAH MANNEH

Questions? Hannahgracemanneh@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL MINISTRIES

I pray that you and your families are well. At our last Parish Council meeting, I left the meeting with an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Not only is our Parish Council fully engaged and supportive of all aspects of St. Paul's, but we are also working together and aligned in the purpose of doing everything we can to bring us closer to Jesus. It is important that when you see a Parish Council member - *Jim Dargavel, Jim Eckstaedt, George Ekizian, William Fawzy, Maria Gallagher, Linda Gorbenko, Georgia Halkia, Alexis Konopisos, Steve Kouracos, Andrew Markis, Ron Tedesco, and Steve Tibbs* - please thank them for their efforts. We are blessed to have this amazing group of people serving St. Paul's!

As we've entered Lent and are preparing for Pascha, this serves as an opportune time to reflect and refocus our daily lives on the Lord Jesus. I encourage you to attend and participate in the many services and activities taking place over the next five weeks at St. Paul's. There are activities for all members of our St. Paul's family and they all will help us refocus our vision back to Jesus. Some of



these activities include our weeknight services—Compline, Presanctified Liturgy and Salutations the Theotokos—Orthodoxy to 101, Hunger Strike, service / volunteer opportunities with FOCUS, *Philoptochos* food the drive, Young Adult and Youth fellowship activities, and more. Please review this Good News and find the opportunities and ministries that resonate most with you and your family.

I also want to mention how blessed we are to have 19 catechumens looking to become Orthodox Christians and part of our St. Paul's family. Please welcome Nicole Arnold, Brenden and Samantha Barrett and their children Bella. Ava. Georgia and Jack, Megan Daniel Devincenzi, Boynge, Antonio Gross, Laura Holland, Richard Kahn, Hannah Kaufman, Tiffany Killip, Alison

Marie, Jordan McNeill, Pete Muran, David Reyes, and Kim Smith. We welcome all of you with open arms and support you on your journey in Orthodoxy and communion with Jesus!

I wish everyone a wonderful Lenten season and as we prepare for Pascha, please identify ways to slow down, find quiet time away from the daily trivialities and distractions we spend far too much time on and be grateful for your blessings.



Thank you for your continued love and support of St. Paul's!

In His Service,

George A. Theodorou

President, Parish Council

STEWARDSHIP — GIVING TO CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Hi, my name is Claire Pearson. I am the newest member of the Stewardship Committee and have the privilege of addressing you today. A quick background on myself so you know where I come from and why I'm here; I grew up in this parish for 18 years, left for school, and returned about



up in this parish for 18 years, left for school, and returned about three years ago. Since then, I've been heavily involved with the Crossroad ministry that is located in Boston, on the campus of Holy Cross, our seminary. It is through that connection that I was able to take a class through the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, a part of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, in Indiana, where I received an Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising. Additionally, I work as a grant writer and am exploring a career in Fundraising and Development for nonprofits.

As I was writing this what I was going to say today, I began reflecting on all the events of my life that have occurred in this church over the past few years: I assisted a wedding, attended my Yiayia's funeral, attended my Godfather's funeral, attended other parishioners' funerals, witnessed 40 day blessings, memorials, at-

tended Liturgies, and celebrated multiple *Paschas*. *This morning, as I walked into church, I realized this building will be where I get married, baptize my children, and one day, when I am very old and no longer of this earth, I will rest here overnight between my Trisagion and my funeral. This building is where my life in Christ begins and where my physical form will be presented to Him when I am laid to rest.*

I've recognized that if I am to spend so many important moments of my life here, what is my role in its upkeep? We hear the phrase, "time, talents, and treasures" quite often when we talk about stewardship. "Well, if you can't donate money, then donate your time or talents." As if time or talents are secondary to anything financial. I want to dispel any assumptions that our God-given talents are not as helpful as money with an example. Imagine a parishioner that can only pledge \$5 a month, but they teach Sunday School. They create a lesson plan every week, work diligently making sure it fits the Gospel reading, and creating an activity that goes along with it. They do this for 10 years. After 10 years, they have donated \$500 that contributed to the fund for a new mosaic, and raised an entire generation of Sunday school students who value and understand Orthodoxy. Those students go to college or start jobs and keep coming back to church, all because a 5th grade Sunday school teacher took the time to help these children understand the Gospel and its truths, and they are excited to see the new icon recently installed.

The point I'm getting at is that time, talent, and treasures are a package. You do not necessarily pick one instead of the other or hold one to a higher value. This Sunday School teacher gifted their monetary treasures, gave their time, and their talent for education to influence a generation of Or-thodox Christians. The confluence of their pledge to Christ imprinted upon multiple generations. What I'm asking today is that when you donate to the church, consider that Stewardship is more holistic than you thought. If you are able to donate your time through volunteering, consider a pledge and maybe join a ministry that aligns with your talents. Or if you pledge every year, join a ministry too! As I stand before you today, I come as a humble servant who has reaped the benefits of all your time, talents, and treasures over the years. As I contemplate the years ahead, I am filled with a profound sense of responsibility. For this building is not merely a place of worship; it is the cornerstone of our journey in Christ. In considering our stewardship, let us remember that it encompasses more than just financial contributions. So, as we ponder our commitments to this be-



loved church, let us embrace the full spectrum of stewardship, recognizing that our gifts, whether of time, talent, or treasures, hold equal value in the eyes of God. To-gether, let us continue to nurture and sustain the spiritual home that binds us as one family in Christ.

Thank you.

Claire Pearson

St. Paul's Stewardship Team

PARISH ORGANIATIONS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

ST. PAUL'S AMBASSADORS <u>FREE</u> DOCENT-GUIDED TOUR OF THE HERITAGE HILL HISTORICAL PARK IN LAKE FOREST WITH LENTEN LUNCH TO FOLLOW AT MITASIE VEGAN CAFE ALSO IN LAKE FOREST ON THURSDAY, APRIL 4th!

We invite all our parishioners and friends to join us at St. Paul's on Thursday, April 4th at 10:30 a.m. to carpool to our **FREE** Docent-Guided Tour at 11:00 a.m. of the Heritage Hill Historical Park in



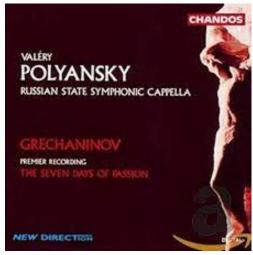
Lake Forest with our Lenten Lunch nearby at the Mitasie Vegan Cafe also in Lake Forest. You are also welcome to meet us there at Heritage Hill at 11:00 a.m. if you wish. The Heritage Hill Historical Park is located at 25151 Serrano Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630; phone: 949-923-2230; website: <u>https://www.ocparks.com/historic-sites/heritage</u> <u>-hill-historical-park</u>. The admission is free! After our tour we plan to go for our Lenten lunch nearby at the Mitasie Vegan Cafe at 22722 Lambert St., Ste 1704, Lake Forest, CA 92630; 949-446-6563; website: <u>https://www.mitasiecafe.com/</u>. You may see all their excellent reviews by clicking onto <u>https://www.yelp.com/biz/mitasievegan-cafe-lake-forest-2</u>. R.S.V.P. to Dean Langis at 949-733-2366

or at <u>dlangis@stpaulsirvine.org</u> so that I may give a headcount for our docent-guided tour. **Thank** you. Please come and bring a friend for a great day!

X

ST. PAUL'S LENTEN MUSIC MATINÉE WITH GRECHANINOV'S CHORAL MASTERPIECE "THE PASSION WEEK," OP. 58 AT 11 AM ON THURSDAY, APRIL 18th TO BE FOLLOWED BY OUR FREE LENTEN LUNCH ALSO AT ST. PAUL'S!

We invite our parishioners and all our friends from our sister parishes to please join us at St. Paul's at 11 am on Thursday, April 18th for the choral masterpiece "Страстная Седмица"/"Strastnaya Sedmista"--"The Passion Week," Op. 58 composed by the great Russian composer Alexander Grechaninov (1864-1956) in 1911 and then of course buried by the Bolsheviks after they took over Russia in 1917. Please R.S.V.P. to Dean Langis at 949-733-2366 or at <u>dlangis@stpaulsirvine.org</u> so that I can have a headcount for our FREE Lenten lunch also at St. Paul's after the performance of "The Passion Week" as sung by the Russian State Symphonic Cappella conducted by Valeri Polyansky. I will have copies of the Slavonic text with the English translation for us all to follow. If for any reason you cannot come that day, you may hear this wonderclicking ful masterpiece at home by onto https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWHzJEZQL3c . Please join us for this superb Orthodox Lenten choral masterpiece with our free Lenten lunch to follow!



X

ST. PAUL'S PASCHAL CHOIR REHEARSES ON SUNDAYS DURING APRIL AFTER LITURGY!

The Paschal Choir is rehearsing on Sundays in April! Please plan to join the Paschal Choir to sing the Paschal canon of hymns praising the Resurrection of Christ this coming Great and Holy Saturday evening May 4th and at the Vespers of Love on Sunday, May 5th at 12 Noon. We meet each Sunday in Lent just outside Father Steve's office for practice after Liturgy, except for Palm Sunday. Please don't pass up this most wonderful experience to worship Christ's resurrection in the truly beautiful songs of praise written by St. John of Damascus (676-749AD).

To participate, please call Genie Martin at: 949 831-5571, or just come every Sunday in April for practice until Palm Sunday.

st Paul's Choir PALM SUNDAY FISH LUNCHEON

April 28, 2024

Saint Paul's Event Center Advance purchase ONLY- after Sunday Liturgy Ticket sales begin April 7th

MENU

Mixed Green Salad with Kalamata Olives Roasted Atlantic Salmon with Lemon Butter Caper Sauce

Rice Pilaf Greek Style Green Beans Rolls

Dutch Apple Pie Coffee, Tea, Wine, Soda, & Water

Adults \$25.00 Children \$10 Ages 5 to 11 | Children under 5 FREE (Mac & Cheese with Fish Sticks)

Questions? Contact: Stacy Gentry @ 949-310-2852

Upcoming Events for Church School Families

SATURDAY OF LAZARUS - April 27

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Family Continental Breakfast & Palm Cross Making Hands of all ages are needed

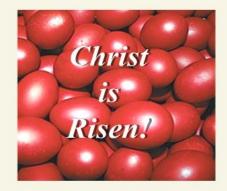




Great and Holy Friday - May 3 Holy Friday Retreat Ages 4 through Grade 6 Middle and High School serve as activity leaders 1:00-3:00 pm Registration is required for students and teen leaders https://stpaulsirvine.org/ChurchSchool 3:00—Descent from the Cross Service

May 5 - Great and Holy Pascha The Feast of all Feasts!

No Church school classes "Agape" Vespers of Love at 12:00 noon





Sunday, May 12 Godparent-Godchild Sunday at Saint Paul's

Invite your child's Godparents, or your own sponsor or Godchildren to attend Saint Paul's on this Sunday and receive Holy Communion together. There is no fasting during the week after Pascha. Bring your Paschal or baptismal candle with you to receive Holy Communion. No Church School classes on this day. Great & Holy Friday @ Chuch School Geote School Friday, May 3 [1:00-2:55 pm Ages 4-Grade 6 Craft [Film | Singing | Activity | Snack 3:00 Descent from the Cross

will serve as Activity Leaders

> Students & Teen Leaders, please register before April 25 at: www.stpaulsirvine.org/churchschool

Help Needed to Decorate St. Paul's! *Please* call the Church Office with questions or to volunteer @ 949-733-2366



Saturday, April 27th 1:30 PM - 4:30PM



Friday, May 3rd 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Saturday, May 4th 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Celebrate the Resurrection!

JOIN FAMILY & FRIENDS AT

MIDNIGHT MEZE

FOLLOWING THE RESURRECTION SERVICE AND PASCHAL LITURGY

in the event center

SOUP & SNACKS PROVIDED BY THE USHER MINISTRY AND WELCOME TEAM

Smiles Provided by YOU!



2024 Pascha Picnic

Pascha Sunday, May 5th @ 1:00 PM

after Agape Service

at St. Paul's

All family & friends are welcome!

Tables of TEN (w/umbrella) @ \$75/table Individual seating at available tables @ \$10/seat Traditional LAMB dinner @ \$27 CHICKEN dinners @ \$22 Children's Dinner of Mac & Cheese w/2 Roasted Drumsticks @ \$10

BEVERAGES available for purchase too!

OR... bring your own favorites!!

Music | Basketball | Easter Egg Hunt | Fun & Games for ALL

Reservations at Table after Liturgy beginning Sunday, March 31st



The 2024 Schedule of Services/Holy Week and Pascha

<u> The Saturday of Lazarus – April 27th</u>

The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom10AMEpistle:Hebrews 12:28 -13:8Gospel:John 11:1-45

Palm Sunday – April 28th

| The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom | 9:30AM |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 | |
| Gospel: John 11:1-45 | |
| The Blessing of Palms | 10:30AM |
| The First Bridegroom Service | 7PM |
| Gospel: Matthew 21: 14-43 | |

Great and Holy Monday – April 29th

| The Second Bridegroom Service | 7PM |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Gospel: Matthew 22:15-23:39 | |

Great and Holy Tuesday – April 30th

| The Third Bridegroom Service | 7PM |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Gospel: John 12:17-50 | |

Great and Holy Wednesday – May 1st

| The Sacrament of Anointing | 3PM |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Epistle:</i> James 5:14-16 <i>Gospel:</i> Mark 6:7-13 | |

The Sacrament of Anointing 7PM

<u>Great and Holy Thursday – May 2nd</u>

The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great10AMEpistle:1 Corinthians 11: 23-32Gospel:Matthew 26:1-27:2The Washing of Feet at the Last Supper 11:30AM

The Service of the Twelve Gospels7PMGospels: Matthew 26:57-27:66; John 13:31-17:26; Mark 15:16-47



<u> Great and Holy Friday – May 3rd</u>

 The Royal Hours
 10AM

 Prophecies: Isaiah 50:4-11; Isaiah 53:1-12; Jeremiah 12:1-15
 Epistles: Romans 5:6-10; Hebrews 2:11-18; Hebrews 10:19-31

 Gospels:
 Luke 23:32-49; John 19:23-37: Matthew 27:1-56

The Descent from the Cross3PMProphecies: Exodus 33:11-23; Job 42:12-17Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2Gospel: Matthew 27:1-61

The Lamentations before the Tomb of Christ 7PM *Prophecy:* Ezekiel 37:1-14 *Epistles:* 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 3:13-14 *Gospel:* Matthew 27:62-66

Great and Holy Saturday – May 4th

The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great10AMProphecies: Genesis 1:1-13; Jonah 1:1-4:11; Daniel 3:1-57Epistle: Romans 6:3-11Gospel: Matthew 28:1-20

PASCHA/The Resurrection Service10PMGospel: Mark 16:1-811PMThe Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom11PMEpistle: Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8Gospel: John 1:1-17

The Holy Pascha of our Lord – Sunday, May 5th

The Vespers of Love12 NoonGospel: John 20:19-25(Read in 12 languages to emphasize the universality of the Gospel)



2024 MINISTRY LEADERS

THE PARISH COUNCIL

President: George Theodorou Vice President: Ron Matthews Treasurer: Jim Eckstaedt Secretary: John Leventis Jim Dargavel, George Ekizian, William Fawzy, Maria Gallagher,

Linda Gorbenko, Georgia Halkia, Alexis Konopisos, Steve Kouracos, Andrew Markis, Ron Tedesco, Steve Tibbs

ST. PAUL'S FOUNDATION

President: Mark Hudoff Vice President: Hugo Aviles Secretary: Bill Lekas Treasurer: Jim Eckstaedt James Alexiou, John Britigan, Nick Davis, George Ekizian, Wayne House, Alex Jianas, Anthony Kalomas, Ted Konopisos, Chris Louis, Leo Lovato, Tom Mallos, Ron Matthews, Steve Tibbs and Father Steven Tsichlis

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Coordinator: Mark Hudoff Jeff Levine, Lou Machos, Jennifer Mitchell, Claire Pearson, Ron Tedesco, Dennis Thomas

PHILOPTOCHOS (Love for the Poor)

President: Priscilla Tedesco Advisor: Barbara House First V.P.: Hresula Hudoff Second V.P. Cherise Matthews Recording Secretary: Bea Dargavel Corresponding Secretary: Monica Leontas Treasurer: Laura Leventis Assistant Treasurer: Nada Gerig

Chaplain: Anita Der Kevorkian Katia Abatjoglou, Katherine Boucher, Kia Davis, Rama Debbaneh, Anita Der Kevorkian, Ginny Farmer-Tomich, Georgia Halkia, Maria Koutures, Denise Leara, Linda Livadas, Helen Louis, Dianne Markis, Kristin Santana, Carol Sekeris, and Barbara Wood

MISSIONS COMMITTEE (Mission is Possible)

Chairman: Alex Gorbenko Secretary: Nadine Mwesigwa Treasurer: Linda Gorbenko St. Photini Well Project: Adam Mwesigwa

AMBASSADORS (AGES 55 AND UP)

Coordinated by: Dean Langis

ST. PAUL'S LIBRARY Jennifer Mitchell

MEN'S PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

Chris Koutures and Chris Stamos

BIBLE STUDY PROGRAMS

Monday Night Bible Study: Eve Tibbs Women's Bible Study: Eve Tibbs Orthodox Koinonia Bible Study: Dean Langis

ST. PAUL'S BOOKSTORE

Joanne Lorton and Denise Oller

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Orthodox Christianity 101: Fr. Steve & Mark Nauroth Orthodox/Catholic Book Club: Fr. Steve Women's Study Fellowship: Dorothea Love

GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Coordinator: Presvytera Elaine Stephanides

CHURCH CATECHETICAL SCHOOL

Executive Director: Eve Tibbs Directors: Denise Canellos, Andrea Fouts, Jim Leontas, Dorothea Love, Cherise Matthews, MaryAnne Smith, and Steve Tibbs

YOUTH/YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

Youth Ministries Coordinator: Georgia Theodorou Youth Leader: Hannah Manneh Acolytes: John Britigan, Dean Langis Hope and Joy: Bea Dargavel Young Adult Ministries: Kevin & Maria Gallagher, Ken Jenkins, Eleni Katalari, Selene Lawrence, Claire Pearson, Ben Rausch, Tim Vleisides

CHOIR/CHURCH MUSIC

Director: Eve Tibbs President: Stacy Gentry Vice-President: Steve Borchert Treasurer: John Smith Secretary: Nanette Bowman Youth Choir Director: Andrea Fouts Assistant Director: Jennifer Hampson

BREAD FOR THE LITURGY

Coordinator: Deacon Daniel Cunningham

WELCOME MINISTRY Coordinators: George Ekizian and Dea Wemmer

USHER MINISTRY

Coordinator: Leo Lovato

ARCHONS OF THE

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE Ted Konopisos, Archon *leronymos* Steve Tibbs, Archon *Orphanotrophos*

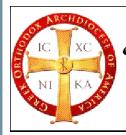
GREEK FOLKDANCE Children

Coordinator: Georgia Theodorou Instructors: Cassiani Kateyiannis & Spiro Sun

Adults Coordinators: Georgia Halkia & Spiro Sun

April In the Year of our Lord 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> දේව | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Study Fellowship, 11 am Bible Study on I John, 7:30 pm via Zoom | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom "Be Still" Meditation and Stretching Class, 5:30 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6 pm Orthodox Christianity 101, 7 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Bible Study, 10 am Tour of Heritage Hill Historical Park in with Lenten Lunch, 11 am Men's Fellowship, 7:30 pm Orthodox Koinonia Bible Study on Psalms & Proverbs, 7:30 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Third Salutations to The Theotokos 7 pm | |
| 7 Veneration of the Holy Cross Morning Prayer, 8:30 am | 8 Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Great Compline | 9 Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom "Be Still" Meditation | 10 Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Pre-Sanctified |]] Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Bible Study, | 12 Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom | 13 |
| Divine Liturgy, 9:30 am Church School, 11 am YA book club 11:45 am | 6 pm Bible Study on 1 John, 7:30 pm via Zoom | and Stretching Class, 5:30 pm Choir, 7 pm Catholic/Orthodox Book Club, 7 pm | <i>Liturgy</i> 6 pm Orthodox Christianity 101, 7 pm | 10 am Orthodox Koinonia Bible Study on Psalms & Proverbs, 7:30 pm | Fourth Salutations to the Theotokos 7 pm | |
| 14 dp | 15 | 16 | <i>17</i> de | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| St. John of the Ladder Morning Prayer, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 9:30 am Church School, 11 am YA book club 11:45 am | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Study Fellowship, 11 am Great Compline 6 pm Bible Study on 1 John, 7:30 pm via Zoom | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom "Be Still" Meditation and Stretching Class, 5:30 pm Parish Council, 6 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Philoptochos Kourambiethes baking 8:30 am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6 pm Orthodox Christianity 101, 7 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Bible Study, 10 am Lenten Music Matinée "The Passion Week" with Lenten Lunch at St. Paul's, 11 am Men's Fellowship, 7:30 pm Orthodox Koinonia Bible Study on Psalms & Proverbs, 7:30 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Philoptochos Koulourakia baking 8:30 am The Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos 7 pm | Hunger Strike Pan-Orthodox Lenten Youth Retreat |
| 21 ද } | 22 | 23 | 24 de | 25 | 26 | 27 द |
| St. Mary of Egypt Morning Prayer, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 9:30 am Church School, 11 am Hunger Strike Youth Retreat YA book club 11:45 am | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Great Compline 6 pm Bible Study on 1 John, 7:30 pm via Zoom | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom "Be Still" Meditation and Stretching Class, 5:30 pm Choir, 7 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6 pm Orthodox Christianity 101, 7 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Women's Bible Study, 10 am Orthodox Koinonia Bible Study on Psalms & Proverbs, 7:30 pm | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Youth (teen) Bible Study 6 pm | The Saturday of Lazarus Morning Prayer, 9 am Divine Liturgy, 10 am Lenten Communion Breakfast and Palm- Cross Making, 11:30 am Palm Sunday Church Decorating 1:30 pm |
| 28 db | 29 df | <i>30</i> 🛟 | May 1 🔶 | May 2 🛟 | May 3 🛟 | May 4 |
| Palm Sunday Morning Prayer, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 9:30am Philoptochos Bake Sale Choir Palm Sunday Luncheon | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom Service of Anointing 3pm Service of | Praying the Psalms 9 am via Zoom St. Basil Liturgy 10 am | Royal Hours 10 am The Unnailing 3 pm The | St. Basil Liturgy 10 am Canon 9 pm Chrismations 9:30 pm |
| Bridegroom Service 7 pm | Bridegroom Service 7 pm | Bridegroom Service 7 pm | Anointing 7pm | The 12 Gospels 7 pm | Lamentations 7 pm | Resurrection & Liturgy 10 pm |



Saint Paul's Greek Orthodox Church

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