

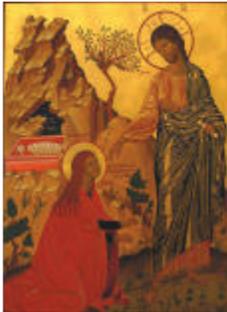
THE MESSAGE TO MHNHYMA

MAY 2021 Newsletter



WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD!

All of us at one time or another have reported seeing someone or something that others did not believe. In fact the English language even has colloquialisms for this disbelief, such as, “You are seeing things” or “You need glasses” or “Don’t look twice”. These phrases often serve to correct a false witness or perception which was arrived at too hastily, after further review or with additional evidence.



Three days after Jesus’ crucifixion and burial outside Jerusalem some of the women disciples returned from His tomb and reported seeing Him alive to his apostles, but as the Evangelist Luke tells us, **“their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them”** (Luke 24:11). How could this be? Jesus, whom many had thought to be a religious-military King, Who would rid Israel of its pagan Roman oppressors had suffered a most horrible death. The victim of religious and political intrigue, He was betrayed by one of his own inner circle of friends. He endured a long, grueling death on the cross and even had a spear stuck into His side by a Roman soldier to make sure He was dead. No, Jesus was definitely dead, they thought.

But unlike the simple things today, which cause us to tell people to quit dreaming or to get some glasses, Jesus appeared to others as well, and more than once. He appeared to Simon Peter in order to rejuvenate him from the grief of his denial. He appeared to Luke and Cleopas as they journeyed to Emmaus and censures them for their weak faith, explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament which were fulfilled through His Passion and Resurrection. He appeared to the disciples who were hiding behind locked doors for fear they would be next to die and demonstrates to them the reality of His Resurrection by inviting them to touch Him and by eating with them. He appeared to the disciples in Galilee at the mountain where Jesus had directed them to go to dispel their doubt and to proclaim the reality of His Resurrection that the resurrected Son of God, living in us and energizing us, makes possible the salvation of all. He appeared again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias where they were fishing symbolizing their commissioning as apostles to preach the gospel and to be **“fishers of men”** (Matthew 4:19).



As we can see, all of these appearances of the Risen Christ are of the utmost importance. They are important because they establish the Resurrection as fact, not fiction. As St. Peter writes, **“For we do not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty”** (2 Peter 1:16). We, too, are called to be eyewitnesses of the Risen Christ.

Throughout Holy Week, the beautiful and inspiring services of our Orthodox Church allowed us to experience both the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. We sing triumphantly, **“Christ is Risen!”**

and we sing it with all our heart because we have seen it, experienced it, witnessed it. Each every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy we are called to see and experience the Risen Christ Who is recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24:31). When we receive the Eucharist at the Divine Liturgy, we publicly acknowledge our faith in Christ’s Resurrection. When we help the poor, the needy, the **“Least of the brothers,”** we recognize the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst. When we strive to put God’s will above our own concerns and cares, we experience the victorious power that was found in the empty tomb. By seeing the Risen Christ with our spiritual vision we are capable of being convincing witnesses to the world around us that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.

Seeing the Risen Christ with our eyes of our souls can have no other response but joy and wonder. But a true experience of this joy cannot be contained. This joyful sight is “Good News”, and like really good news, longs to be shared with others by our joyful demeanor, our loving attitude, our welcoming disposition, our eager words, our giving heart, and in general by our entire risen self. May seeing the Risen Christ give us eyes by which many will desire to see and experience His love, joy and eternal blessings!

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen! †Fr. Ted



THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST: Now that we have seen the Resurrection of Christ, let us adore the all-holy Lord Jesus, the only Sinless One. We bow in worship before Your Cross, O Christ, and we praise and glorify Your Resurrection, for You are our God, and we have no other, and we magnify Your Name. All the faithful, come: let us adore the Holy Resurrection of Christ, for behold, through the Cross joy has come to the world! Let us always bless the Lord, let us sing His Resurrection, for by enduring for us the pain of the Cross, He has crushed death by His death.

A PRAYER: O Lord, Jesus Christ, You brought Light into the world. May the Light of Your Resurrection shine throughout the world bringing with it Your message of peace and hope.

1. We pray for the Church, that all Christians be instruments of Your peace, and believe always in Your love.
2. We pray for all those in doubt, Lord, help their unbelief.
3. We pray for people who have difficulty in forgiving themselves and others.

Let them hear Your words, “Peace be with you.”

4. We pray for the many people suffering all kinds of deprivation. Help us all to bring about Your kingdom here on earth.

Lord, we place all our prayers into Your hands and we trust in Your love and mercy. Help us be true followers and lead us home into Your kingdom. Amen.



*God made a mother and
God made her the dearest thing on earth.
He gave her hands to guide us
from the moment of our birth.
God gave her eyes that see our souls and
a will to never tire.
God gave her faith and wisdom and
the power to inspire.
God taught her how to sacrifice and
ask for little pay.
God taught her how to offer love
even for those who stray.
God made her heart forgiving and
on patience made her long.
He gave her a never-failing sense
to know the right from wrong.
God surely made all mothers and
as near as I can see,
From all His labors must have saved
the very best for me!*



For all Greek Orthodox Christians, the most appropriate observance of “Mother’s Day” should be a prayerful remembrance of the women to whom we all owe so much. If God has taken our mothers to His eternal home, again no tribute can be more satisfying than our prayers for the blessed repose of their souls. On Sunday, May 9th we celebrate Mother’s Day. Come to church, light a candle in her honor, submit her name for commemoration at the Prothesis Service for “well-being” or for “blessed repose,” receive Holy Communion, and offer a prayer of thanks to the Lord for your mother.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

**“We venerate Your Cross, O Master,
And Your Holy Resurrection we glorify!”**



THE SUNDAYS AFTER PASCHA

The first Sunday after Pascha tells us about the Disciple Thomas, doubting Thomas! At the Agape Vespers on Easter, the passages from John 20:19-25 are read. The Disciple Thomas was not present the first time Jesus appeared to the Disciples. He declared, **“Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”** A week later, Jesus again appeared to the Disciples. On the Sunday after Pascha we learn how Thomas saw Christ, how he fell to his knees, and declared his faith in the Risen Christ. This period begins by focusing on belief in the Resurrection.

The following Sunday brings our attention to the Myrrh-bearing Women who went to the tomb to anoint the Body of Christ (Mark 15:42-16:8). They went to the tomb and unexpectedly became the first persons to hear the announcement of the Resurrection, **“Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen!”** In addition, those women were charged with telling the Disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. They were the first to proclaim the Resurrection of Christ to the world.

The next Sunday is devoted to the story of the healing of a paralyzed man (John 5:1-15). It tells about the immediate healing of a man who was paralyzed for 38 years, long years – a lifetime! In the context of the post-Pascha Sundays, the message is that we human beings, bound by sin, evil and death, are freed by Christ’s resurrection to live a new life full of spiritual potential. One of the Vespers hymns for this day declares, *“The paralytic, was like a dead man unburied, having seen You, O Lord, cried out...I come to You, O Fountain of Healing...”* And a hymn from the Orthros calls, *“Raise up, O Lord, my soul, with Your divine providence, as you raised the paralytic of old.”*

The vivifying power of the Resurrection of Christ is then emphasized the following Sunday when we recall Christ’s encounter with the Samaritan Woman (John 4:5-32). Once again, a woman proclaims to her fellow villagers the good news of the new life in Christ. We are taught that belief in Him is like “a fountain of water, springing up into life everlasting,” and we learn that “God is a spirit; and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and truth.”

The last of these Sundays tells a complex story of the healing of a man blind from birth (John 9:1-38). One of the most important teachings in it, however, is that Jesus is the Son of God. The healed blind man’s reaction to Jesus’ question **“Do you believe in the Son of God?”** becomes a core element of our own response to Christ’s Resurrection: **“I believe, Lord. And falling down he worshipped Him.”**



EASTER OFFERING APPEAL: Through the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, the Grace of God flows upon us and we are led to the road of salvation. Let us accept this Gift of God with a contrite heart, clean spirit and with abounding faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Your Clergy and Parish Council extend to all of you their best wishes for a joyous Pascha. We also ask you to please remember our Cathedral with a generous Easter Offering. Be as generous in your love for Him as He is in His love for you.

Easter Offering envelopes have been mailed to all our members. They may be returned by mail or offered at the collection plate during services. Extra envelopes are available at the candle stands in the Cathedral and the counter of the church office.

WHY THE CHURCH IS IMPORTANT

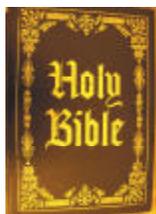
**We
were made
for
WORSHIP!**

The following is a true story. A young woman came to church one Sunday with her family. As she sat in the pew and listened to the choir her mind passed over many things. Her attention seemed to be caught more by the external movement of the Divine Liturgy than by its spiritual meaning. Then she noticed a little girl up front who held a blue covered service book in her hands and followed the service with unusual concentration. As the Liturgy was concluded the little girl carefully closed the book, raised it slowly to her lips and kissed it. The young lady was deeply touched by this act of personal devotion. Her own heart stirred as she witnessed what she interpreted as a spontaneous expression of the love of God. The faith of the little girl re-ignited her own faith in an unforgettable way.

"See you in church!" people sometimes call out, probably thinking of the church building located in a particular place. But the Church (note capital "C") is the people – all of us who bear the name of Christ – who are united with Him and with each other, and who support each one another. Even without a church building we ourselves are and never cease to be the Church. As we celebrate the Eucharist together, or share our lives with each other, or go about our own private affairs, we are the living Body of Christ, stirring and growing by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Through numerous prayers in our worship we continuously pray for the unity, well being and mission of the Church. At the end of the Divine Liturgy we pray:

"O Lord, You Who blesses those who bless You, and sanctify those who trust in You; save Your people and bless Your inheritance; protect the whole body of Your Church, and sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house. Glorify them in return with Your divine power and do not forsake us who put our hope in You. Give peace to Your world, to Your churches, to Your priests, to our rulers, to the armed forces, and to all Your people. For every good giving and every perfect gift is from above coming down from You, the Father of Light, and to You we offer up glory, thanksgiving and worship, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever."

The Church is the family of God, called to existence by God's love in Jesus Christ. The Church is the new community of love. It is within the Church we are first introduced to the life of Christ, grow up in it, learn more about it and practice it in a whole range of human relationships. Our primary goals are to grow in God's love and to make God's love known to others, so that they may rejoice in it too. We are not perfect as Christians but seek to grow toward the fullness of Christ. The ideal before us is to be worthy of God and His calling according to the words of St. Peter: **"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"** (1 Peter 2:9).



SCRIPTURE SPEAKS: "And He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness of God should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:18-20).

The head and the body have one and the same nature. In this case the body comes from, submits to and continues to exist in the head, so the one nature is the glorified humanity of Christ. As Christ has supreme and life-giving authority (the firstborn) over the original creation, where life is temporary, so He has supreme and life-giving authority over the new creation, where life is eternal. But now He is the Head through the body, the Church. The Church, then, is the source of restoration and fulfillment of creation in Christ.

Jesus is everything. God in all fullness; and in human nature, resurrected and ascended, he is the created and glorified Head of all creation. Jesus Christ ends the alienation between God and creation, bringing creation as a sacrament into a living union with God.

THOUGHT: If you live right each day, you will be neither afraid of tomorrow nor ashamed of yesterday.

IN MEMORIAM: THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

**They've taken the City, they've taken Saloniki,
they've taken Hagia Sophia, the grand monastery,
with its forty wooden songs, with its sixty-two bells.**

**Slowly now proceed the Holy Gifts,
doves descended into their midst.**

**Silence now the Cherubic Hymn,
set down now the Holy Gifts.**

**Let clergy take those Gifts away,
And your candles put out your flames.**

**For this is now the will of God
That the City by a colony of the Turks.
The Mother of God was troubled indeed,
the icons wept their tears.**

**Be still, O Mother of God,
you icons cease your weeping.
For again some day this shall be yours.**



WISDOM OF THE FATHERS: "Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become gods for His sake, since He became man for our sakes. He assumed the worse, that He might give us the better, He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich. He took upon Him the form of a servant, that we might receive back our liberty. He came down, that we might be exalted. He was tempted, that we might conquer. He was dishonored, that He might glorify us. He died, that He might save us. He resurrected, that He may give us hope for a new life. He ascended, that He might draw to Himself us, who were lying low in the Fall of sin..." *St. Gregory the Theologian*

TRY GOD!

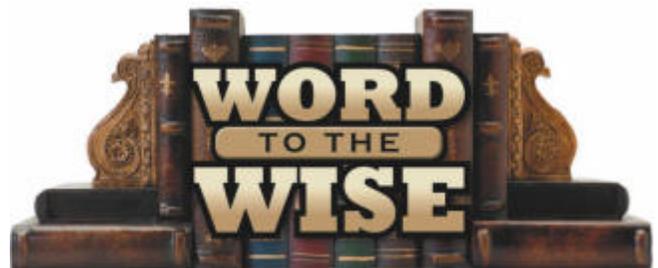
A prison warden was told once, "Leopards don't change their spots." The warden, a deeply devoted Christian, who believed in the power of Jesus Christ to change people, replied, "Sir, I don't have any leopards in my prison. I only have people and people do change!"

*When troubles are deep and your world is dark,
don't give up hope, TRY GOD!*

*When your life turns south and you've lost your way,
don't give up hope, TRY GOD!*

*When fears stack up and you're sure no one cares,
don't give up hope, TRY GOD!*

*When temptation comes knocking and you struggle with it so,
don't give up hope, TRY GOD!*



YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

CHOCOLATE OR VANILLA? A mother took her children to the ice-cream store. The clerk asked them, "Chocolate or vanilla?" "Don't you have any other flavors," the mother replied. "I get so tired of these two." "Lady," the man said, "if you knew how much time it takes folks to make up their minds between chocolate and vanilla, you'd never get to the other flavors."

You know, that is exactly what Satan has done. He has given the world so many different flavors to choose from that people everywhere are rushing around trying to find just the right flavor and forget what God has given them.

One of Satan's best tricks is to get you so busy with all the worldly choices that you do not have time to grow spiritually. St. Paul wrote, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). The word "wiles" means trick or stratagem intended to snare or deceive. Satan wants nothing more than to see you lost eternally, and has held nothing back to achieve his goal.

Satan will set before you all the different flavors it takes to keep you so busy trying to choose the right one and all the while you are dying outside of Christ.

YOUTH MEETING DATE: Our final monthly meeting of the ministry year FOR Jr. GOYA & GOYA will take place on Monday, May 10th (note date change due to Pascha) from 6:30-7:30pm. Face masks are required for all participants. We look forward to seeing everyone!

THE MAY FAITH BOX will be distributed at the May 10th youth meeting. You may also register to receive a box at church on Sundays or in the church office by completing the form at tinyurl.com/mayfaithbox. This will be the last Faith Box for this school year. Please contact Fr. Dimitri with any questions.

JR. OLYMPICS UPDATE: The Olympics are back, although in a restricted format due to COVID and that our usual venue of Stagg High School is not available this year. The following events for these age groups will be held at Ss. Constantine and Helen n Palos Hills, IL on May 22-23: 7-9 soccer, 7-10 basketball, 11-13 basketball, 13-18 boys volleyball, 13-18 girls volleyball, 13-18 co-ed softball. If you would like to register your child to participate, please contact Pete Georgiadis at massow15@comcast.net or Kevy Paviadakis at kevy44@hotmail.com.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS for the AHEPA, GOYA, Cathedral, Novak Family Foundation and the Panagiotis Proimos Memorial Scholarships are available in the church office. All high school seniors of our Cathedral are eligible. To be considered for one of the scholarships all you need to do is pick up an application, fill it out and return it to the church office by the Monday, May 3rd deadline.

FANARI CAMP UPDATE: The Metropolis of Chicago has announced that Fanari Camp, cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will take place this summer at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center. Sessions will be held: Week 1 - June 13-19; Week 2 - June 20-26; Week 3 - June 27-July 3; Week 4 - July 4-10; Week 5 - July 11-17. Parents can find more information on registration and set up their CampDoc account at www.fanari.camp/summer-camp. Waiting list notifications should be taking place to inform families of what week they are to attend.

VBS NEWS FLASH—SAVE THE DATE: We are tentatively planning on resuming VBS this year the week of June 7th. Stay tuned for more details in the Sunday bulletin.

GOYA LAMB RAFFLE: Our GOYA would like to thank everyone who supported their Lamb Raffle this year. All proceeds raised benefit GOYA Scholarships. Lamb Raffle winners will be announced in the weekly Sunday bulletin. Again, thank you one and all!

THOUGHT: A person's greatest vices are the misuse of his/her virtues.



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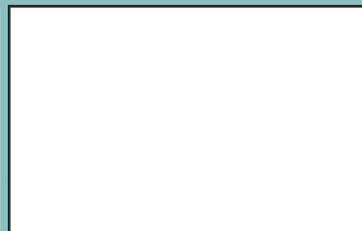
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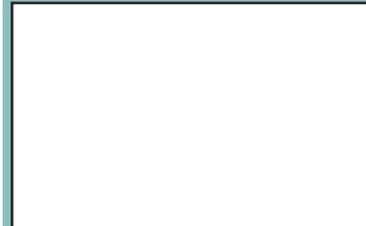
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SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our church office hours are from 9:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Friday. The church office is closed on Saturday and Sunday.

Announcements for the Sunday bulletin and names to be commemorated for Memorials on Sunday need to be submitted to the church office by Wednesday at 12:00 noon. Articles or announcements for the monthly newsletter "The Message" need to be submitted to Fr. Ted by the 1st of each month for the upcoming month.

HELPING HAND FUND: This fund was established to help families in our parish with financial hardships. Many of our very own require financial assistance during difficult times. It is a very comforting feeling knowing that you can go "home" and find help that is given freely and with love. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Fr. Ted at the church office 769-2481.

FOOD PANTRY APPEAL: Our Food Pantry is seeking donations of canned or dried food items, as well as personal hygiene supplies and household cleaning supplies. Donations may be brought to church on Sundays or left at the church office during the week.

Our Cathedral Food Pantry, which is held each Friday from 9:00-11:00 a.m., is the core of our Outreach Program. Each week, numerous families and individuals come to us for assistance. Many of these families have four or more children. We try to provide the basic food stuffs for at least one week. Please, assist our Food Pantry in any way you can. You will truly be blessed for it!

JC'S CLOSET UPDATE: Our Outreach Project of JC's Closet will be held on Friday, May 7th & 14th, from 9:00-11:00am in the Gold Room.

Thanks to our community of Ss. Constantine and Helen we have been able to assist 12 domestic abuse & homeless shelters, school social workers and numerous after-care/transitional families. Since we reopened we have supplied those with need with over 5,000 items from clothing, household items, gift cards, etc. The demand continues to grow in all three counties we support (Lake, Porter & LaPorte).

Your continued donations change lives, lift up people and make our community a better place. It takes special people and a special parish family to keep this ministry going. Our Cathedral of Ss. Constantine and Helen is a continued beacon of light and hope for our community. Thank you to all for your faith and support of this ministry.

Donations will be accepted again in the coming months. Target or Walmart gift cards are also welcomed. For more information on this program and/or how you can assist, see Eva Kostides. Thank you!

ATTENTION PARISHIONERS: If you are planning to move to a new location, or if you have already moved, please inform the church office so that we may change our records. It costs our parish money for every piece of mail that is returned as "Address Change Requested." PLEASE let the church office know of any changes to your address, home or cell phones, email address, etc. Remember, before making any firm plans for baptisms, weddings, funerals or memorial services, please check with the parish priest first to see if dates and times are permissible.

Also, please refrain from scheduling baby or bridal showers during the Lenten fast, or on Sundays during worship hours.

When scheduling a Sunday Memorial Service, kolyva (boiled wheat) is needed (COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted). People are once again scheduling memorials without bringing kolyva, let alone sacramental wine (St. John Commandaria), bread, olive oil or a donation for the poor. Please follow our Orthodox practices!

AHEPA SUNDAY will be celebrated in our parish on Sunday, May 16th. On this day we will honor and remember the 99th Anniversary of the founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), 96th for our local chapter of the Order of AHEPA and 82nd year for our chapter of the Daughters of Penelope. An Artoklasia and memorial service will be offered on this day in honor of AHEPA. All members of the AHEPA and the Daughters should be in church on this day at the proper time for these services.

GRADUATE SUNDAY will be held on Sunday, June 6th. On this day our parish honors the academic accomplishments of our graduates from high school, college or university who has had their name submitted to the church office by Wednesday, June 2nd.

"As the Prophets beheld, as the Apostles have taught, as the Teachers have dogmatized, as the Universe has agreed, as Grace has shown forth, as Truth was revealed....This is the Faith of the Apostles. This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Orthodox. This is the Faith which has established the Universe...."



PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING UPDATE: The monthly meeting of our St. Helen's Philoptochos Society will be Monday, May 10th, 6:30 pm in the Great Hall. Due to COVID-19 restrictions all those attending must wear a mask and keep social distancing.

PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP is ongoing throughout the year. Philoptochos needs YOU to fulfill its mission! You can support Philoptochos either as an active member or as a supportive member. For those too busy to attend a monthly meeting or be involved in any of its ministries or activities, your yearly \$30 or more membership is a meaningful way to participate and offer your assistance.

FEAST DAY CELEBRATION: The Philoptochos requests that the ladies of our parish bake and bring sweets for our Feast Day celebration. Items may be dropped off at church during the day on Thursday, May 20th or prior to the Vespers Service.

THANK YOU: Our Philoptochos Society would like to thank everyone who supported their Palm Sunday Bake Sale. Your generosity benefited Philoptochos' many philanthropic endeavors.



METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO LENTEN RETREAT: The group pictured above, Dalia Spanos, Tasia Kavadas, Fr. Dimitri Burikas, Giasemo Petsalis & Irene Batalis represented our St. Helen's Philoptochos at the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos Lenten Retreat last month at The Ascension of our Lord GOC in Lincolnshire, IL. Fr. Dimitri was the featured speaker for the English presentation. All who attended enjoyed the Retreat and look forward to next year's.

STEWARDSHIP & YOU



There is an incipient danger in thinking that, since there are so many belonging to the church, why not "Let the others do it?" An eastern story tells of four brothers who decided to have a feast. As wine was rather expensive, they agreed that each one should bring an equal quantity and add it to the common stock.

One of the brothers thought he might escape his contribution by bringing water instead of wine. "It won't be noticed in the common wine jar," he reasoned. But when, at the feast, the wine was poured out, it turned out not to be wine at all but plain water. All four brothers had thought alike. Each one had said, "Let the other do it."

Our Cathedral of Ss. Constantine and Helen has been on the Stewardship Program for many years. The Stewardship Program allows the members of our parish to give of themselves, of their time, talent and financial resources, to the church accordingly as they themselves have been blessed by God. Praise the Lord that many in our community have adopted this program and have given generously, allowing our church to meet its financial obligations.

Yet, there are still many members who have adopted the idea of "Let others do it." Some people in our community give just a token amount to the church, while others give nothing at all. They believe that they don't need to support the church and all its ministries, because they don't need the church or don't use the church. **THIS BELIEF IS WRONG AND UNCHRISTIAN!**

St. John Chrysostom says, "Do not keep away from the Church. Your hope is the Church. Your salvation is the Church. Your refuge is the Church." **EVERYONE NEEDS THE CHURCH!** It is through the Church that the Good News of Salvation is proclaimed to all people, both believers and nonbelievers. Thus, it is every member's obligation and responsibility to support with love and joy their church.

Our Cathedral depends on everyone, young and old, rich and poor, single or married, to do their fair share in giving and supporting the church financially. Look at your financial support of our Cathedral and ask yourself these two questions: **AM I GIVING OF MYSELF FAIRLY? IS MY GIVING EQUAL TO MY ABILITY?**

We will never truly know the meaning of faith, unless we learn to give freely and joyously, not only of our substance, but of ourselves.

As of April 13th, the church office has received 477 pledge forms for a total of \$354,260. This averages out to \$742 per pledge. This average pledge amount is less than half the total needed (\$1500) to operate and maintain our Cathedral and keep and expand our many ministries. We cannot stress enough that we need to raise \$800,000 in paid pledges. If the other 400 Stewards of our parish, who haven't pledged, pay the \$1500 per pledge, we will have more than enough funds to balance our budget, meet our expenses and operate our Cathedral without begging for money or using various fund raising gimmicks.

We stress to all our membership that it is everyone's responsibility to support the our parish through their time, talent and financial resources. Our parish needs your support now, so she can minister to you when you are in need, both today or in the future. Be a good Steward, make a pledge and keep to it!

Reports of Contribution (from January 1-March 31) were mailed out to our entire membership at the beginning of April. This is done to act as a reminder how you stand in regards to your pledge. Please review your report for any errors. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

To make giving easier for all our faithful, we have established an online program called [Tithe.ly/give](https://tithe.ly/give). This will allow those who have internet accessibility to continue to make offerings for stewardship payments, candles, Helping Hand, Food Pantry, Fall Greek Fest and other donations that help cover the costs of operating our parish with just a click of your computer keys. Here is the link:

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1385847>.

It is a profession of faith when we all work together and help our church to better plan for its various financial needs and expenditures. Thank you!



MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES MONDAY, MAY 31, 2021 Ridgelawn Cemetery: 8:30 – 11:00am Calumet Park: 11:30am – 1:00pm

At 8:30am at the Ridgelawn Cemetery by the monument of SS. Constantine and Helen, a general Trisagion Prayer Service will take place to accommodate those who wish to leave early. With so many faithful seeking to have the Memorial Prayers, Fr. Ted asks that everyone be patient and remain prayerfully respectful. To move things along a little quicker, please write out clearly, in Greek or English, the names of the deceased to be commemorated. Also, for families who have loved ones in various sections at Ridgelawn, it is not necessary to wander from grave to grave. Please choose one grave area and have all the names commemorated there. The spiritual importance is that the prayer is offered, not where it takes place.

At approximately 11:30am at Calumet Park, a general Trisagion Prayer Service will be offered for those who wish to leave early at the monument of the Holy Cross. Following that, Fr. Ted and Fr. Dimitri will offer prayers at the graves, going row by row. After Fr. Ted will go to the Calumet Park Mausoleum and offer prayers for those interred there.

In case of severe rain or thunderstorms on this day, a general Trisagion will be offered at the SS. Constantine and Helen monument at Ridgelawn under umbrellas at 8:30am and under umbrellas at the monument of the Holy Cross at Calumet Park at 11:30am.



THOUGHT FOR MEMORIAL DAY: Some years after the Vietnam War, prisoners of war were brought back to America. Many of the half-starved, battered and scarred POWs told tales of great brutality and deprivation. Some reported that the only thing that helped them endure and keep their sanity was their knowledge of the Bible and their prayers they learned long ago.

In most camps no Bibles or religious books were permitted. But often one or two of the men had memorized Bible verses at some time in their lives. Now they found these fragments of God's Word coming back to them, bringing back sweet encouragement and unwavering strength. They shared these verses with other prisoners, and they too were encouraged and strengthened.

Thank God for the way He spoke through His memorized Word to many desperate men, who needed something to keep them going. What a blessing to know that His Word in written form quickens and encourages believers whether it is on ones' lips or memorized and stored in one's mind.

FOR PONDERING: When we speak about wisdom, we are speaking of Christ. When we speak about virtue, we are speaking of Christ. When we speak about justice, we are speaking of Christ. When we speak about peace, we are speaking of Christ. When we speak about truth and life and redemption, we are speaking of Christ.
-St. Ambrose

ONCE A MAN is united to God, how could he not live forever? Once a man is separated from God, what can he do but wither and die?

Ss. CONSTANTINE & HELEN GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
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CHRIST THE VICTORIOUS CONQUEROR
Pascha as the celebration of Christ's destruction of death
by Fr. Dimitri Burikas



Before the lambs were roasted and eaten, before the eggs were dyed and cracked, before the candles were lit and we sang “Χριστός Ανέστη” (“Christ is risen”), a great battle was fought and won by our Lord Jesus Christ. This battle was not fought against men or machine, but against the devil. This battle was not fought for land, for resources or for power, but for the human race and its freedom.

On Pascha, we celebrate the triumph of our Lord over the devil, over Hades, and over death. In our churches, we welcome the risen Christ with flowers (Holy Saturday morning), with songs (the aforementioned “Christ is risen”), and with a feast (the midnight Divine Liturgy as well as the Agape meal). These actions were in ancient times reserved for kings upon their return after success in battle, and in the Church it is no different.

We too, welcome a King. This King is not like the kings of old who ruled with a crown and a scepter. Our King has ruled from the beginning of time when He created the universe, and He rules through His humility and love. His Kingdom is the Church and the hearts of every human being that believes in Him as the true God.

We too celebrate the destruction of an enemy. Every battle is fought against an enemy. The enemy of humanity from the beginning was death itself, but Christ has destroyed death through His own death and resurrection. As St. John Chrysostom said in his Paschal homily – which is still read in every Orthodox church on Pascha – “O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” And again, “Christ is risen, and you – o death – are annihilated! Christ is risen, and life is liberated! Christ is risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead!”

We too, enjoy the peace and freedom following our King's victory. From the beginning of human history until the coming of Christ, humanity was enslaved by death. Its finality brought despair to us as people because there was no hope of anything after the grave. If we are afraid of death, then we attach ourselves to the things of this earthly life: material gain, pleasures, power. We put our trust in these things above God because “what does it matter, I'm going to die one day either way.” In that way, we became slaves, slaves to our own passions and desires through the fear of death.

Christ, however, has captured our captor. “Hades was filled with bitterness when it met You face to face below,” St. John Chrysostom said, “It was embittered, for it was brought to nothing; It was embittered, for it was mocked; it was embittered, for it was overthrown; it was embittered, for it was put in chains.” Through Christ, we have been set free and have been liberated from our fear of death. We no longer have fear but love, love for God and our fellow man.

In conquering death, Christ has won the battle that we ourselves could not win. None of us have the power to conquer death. No matter

how strong in body, no matter how intelligent in mind, all of us one day will succumb to death. Only Christ, being both man and God, could enter into death and emerge again as a champion. Because of it, our deaths are not the end, they are not permanent. Rather, we too will rise again and join our Lord at the banquet table honoring His victory.

The feast of Pascha should instill in our hearts the same emotions people felt for the great kings of times past: honor, respect, admiration, and love. We feel this way towards our Lord because through His death and resurrection He has shown infinite love for us His creatures. After all, He did not choose to enter this battle for His own benefit or glory; rather, He did it on our behalf. He could have allowed us to stay mired in the slavery of death forever and ever, but He chose to take on our humanity, to walk with us in our brokenness, to taste death on the cross and to overcome the great oppressor of our race. He emptied Himself so that we could be filled. He has made us as His own children, placing our lowly and sinful humanity at the right hand of God in Paradise. As such, His victory over death is our victory.

I pray that during this joyful time of year, we all embrace our loving Lord as the champion of our salvation, and with faith proclaim the good news of His rising from the dead for all the world to hear and be transformed with us. Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Ss. Constantine & Helen Feast Day Celebration:

Great Vespers – Thursday, May 20th

Feast Day – Friday, May 21st

Jr. Olympics - Friday, Saturday & Sunday, May 28th-30th

Motor Cycle/Bike Blessings - Saturday, May 29th

Memorial Day Grave Blessings - May 31st

Graduate Sunday – Sunday, June 6th

VBS – June 7th-10th

Grecian Festival – Friday, Saturday & Sunday, July 9th, 10th & 11th

Memorials will not be celebrated on these Sundays in 2021:

May 2nd & 9th, June 20th, August 15th, and November 21st.

HOLY WEEK CELEBRATION

The triumphant singing of “Christos Anesti – Christ is Risen” continues to resound in the hearts of the faithful as we have brought to a joyful end another period of prayer and fasting. What a great sense of joy to offer praise, glory and adoration to our Risen Lord! We are grateful to so many in our church family who pitched in by doing so many acts that contributed toward the beauty and festive atmosphere of the Paschal celebration. The ministries of giving of time, talent and treasure overflowed through financial donations, of reading, singing, serving, cleaning, ushering and so much more. These all added a significant dimension to this most important religious observance of Pascha for us as Orthodox Christians. Thank you one and all!

However, we cannot stand pat, nor look to the past. Now is the time to, in the words of St. Paul, “**let us strain forward to what lies ahead**” (Philippians 3:13). We must put our living faith into action. We must resolve to “*try to please God*” in everything we say and do.

