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*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

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of Services This Week



April 5, 2026 – Palm Sunday

The Inner Unity of the Triodion

Palm Sunday

‘Blessed is He that comes. . .’: this is the feast of Christ the King – welcomed by the children at His entry into Jerusalem, and to be welcomed likewise by each one of us into our own heart. ‘Blessed is He that comes. . .’ – that comes not so much out of the past as *out of the future*: for on Palm Sunday we welcome not only the Lord who entered Jerusalem long ago, riding on a donkey, but the Lord who comes again in power and great glory, as King of the Future Age. Palms and branches are blessed after the Gospel at Matins, and held with lighted candles during the rest of the service. Although at one time the Eastern Church – like Western Christendom up to the present – used to hold a procession on Palm Sunday, this has now fallen into disuse and there is no mention of it in the existing Triodion.

Very frequently repeated at this feast is the sticheron beginning, ‘Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together. . . .’ It is possible to see reflected here the practice of St. Euthymius, St. Sabbas and other Palestinian monks in the fifth and sixth centuries. Shortly after the Feast of Theophany they left their monasteries to make a Lenten retreat in the wilderness, either singly or with a

companion, spending the following weeks in silence and continual prayer, eating nothing but wild roots. Then, on Saturday afternoon in the sixth week of Lent, they all returned to their monasteries for the vigil service of Palm Sunday, in order to celebrate Holy Week together with their brethren. In isolated Orthodox parishes throughout the western world, something similar occurs each year. Scattered members of the parish community, living far from the church and scarcely ever able to attend the services at other times, start to appear in church at the vigil service before Palm Sunday, and as Holy Week continues their numbers steadily increase. Like the monks of ancient Palestine, we in the present can also say with truth on Palm Sunday, ‘Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together. . . .’

On the days following His entry to Jerusalem, Christ spoke to His disciples in particular about the signs that will precede the Last Day (Matt. 24 and 25); and so this forms the theme of the first part of Holy Week. The eschatological challenge of the first three days of Holy Week is summed up in the troparion and exapostilarion at Matins, both of which are repeated three times to a slow and solemn melody. The troparion, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night. . .’, is based on the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13); the exapostilarion, ‘I see Your bridal chamber. . .’, on the parable of the man cast out from the feast because he had no wedding garment (Matt. 22:11-13). Here, presented in especially urgent terms, is the call that we have heard on many occasions during Lent: ‘the End is near at hand; be watchful; repent while there is still time.’ In modern practice, these services are usually held by anticipation the evening before.

Each of the three days has its own particular theme. On Monday we commemorate the Patriarch Joseph, whose innocent sufferings (Gen. 37, 39-40) prefigure the Passion of Christ. Also we commemorate the barren fig tree cursed by our Lord (Matt. 21:18-20) – a symbol of the judgment that will befall those who show no fruits of repentance; a symbol, more specifically of the unbelieving Jewish synagogue.

On Tuesday the liturgical texts refer chiefly to the parable of the Ten Virgins, which forms the general theme of these three days. They refer also to the parable of the Talents that comes immediately after it (Matt. 25:14-30). Both these are interpreted as parables of judgment.

On Wednesday we commemorate the woman that was a sinner who anointed Christ’s feet as He sat in the house of Simon. In the hymnography of the day, the account in Matthew 26:6-13 is combined with that in Luke 7:36-50 (see also John 12:1-8). A second theme is the agreement made by Judas with the Jewish

authorities: the repentance of the sinful harlot is contrasted with the tragic fall of the chosen disciple. The Triodion makes it clear that Judas perished, not simply because he betrayed his Master, but because, having fallen into the sin of betrayal, he then refused to believe in the possibility of forgiveness: 'In misery he lost his life, *preferring a noose rather than repentance.*' If we deplore the actions of Judas, we do so not with vindictive self-righteousness but conscious always of our own guilt: 'Deliver our souls, O Lord, from the condemnation that was his.' (Compline for Holy Wednesday) In general, all the passages in the Triodion that seem to be directed against the Jews should be understood in this same way. When the Triodion denounces those who rejected Christ and delivered Him to death, we recognize that these words apply not only to others, but to ourselves: for have we not betrayed the Savior many times in our hearts and crucified Him afresh?

On the evening of Holy Wednesday the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is usually celebrated and all are anointed, whether physically ill or not; for there is no sharp line of demarcation between bodily and spiritual sicknesses, and this sacrament confers not only bodily healing but forgiveness of sins, thus serving as a preparation for the reception of Holy Communion on the next day.

On Holy Thursday four events are celebrated: the washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the agony in the garden of Gethsemane (but the liturgical texts do not dwell much on this), and the betrayal of Christ by Judas. In certain cathedrals and monasteries, there is a special ceremony of feet-washing at the conclusion of the Liturgy, with the bishop or abbot taking the part of Christ and twelve priests representing the apostles. At the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, and at the centers of other Patriarchates and Autocephalous Churches, the Holy Chrism is blessed during the Liturgy on this day; but the rite does not take place in every year. The meaning of Holy Thursday is summed up in a text of singular beauty, repeated many times at the Liturgy, which combines the themes of Eucharistic Communion, Judas' treachery, and the confession of the Good Thief:

O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant of Your mystical Supper: For I will not speak of this mystery to Your enemies; nor like Judas will I give You a kiss; But like the penitent thief I confess to You: O Lord, remember me, when You come into Your Kingdom.

On Great Friday we celebrate the sufferings of Christ: the mockery, the crown of thorns, the scourging, the nails, the thirst, the vinegar and gall, the cry of desolation, and all that the Savior endured on the Cross; also the confession of the Good Thief. At the same time, the Passion is not separated from the Resurrection; even on this day of our Lord's deepest self-abasement, we look forward also to the

revelation of His eternal glory: ‘We venerate Your Passion, O Christ; show us also Your glorious Resurrection.’

The Cross and the Resurrection, as we have seen, are aspects of a single, undivided act of salvation: “Your Cross, O Lord, is life and resurrection. . . .”

Friday Matins are usually ‘anticipated’ and held on Thursday evening. They take a special form, with a series of twelve Gospel readings that begins with Christ’s discourse at the Last Supper and ends with the account of His burial. On Friday morning, the Hours take a solemn form, as on the eves of Christmas and Theophany, with an Old Testament reading, an Epistle and Gospel at each Hour.

On Holy Saturday, we celebrate the burial of Christ and His descent into hell. The burial is celebrated in the Vespers service of Friday evening. At the end of the service, the Epitaphion (or Plaschanitsa) – an oblong piece of stiffened cloth on which is painted or embroidered the figure of the dead Christ laid out for burial – is carried in procession around the outside of the church, and is then venerated by the faithful. There are few more moving moments in the whole of the Church’s Year.

Christ’s descent into hell is celebrated in a vesperal liturgy of St. Basil on Saturday morning or early afternoon. Originally this service took place in the evening, but it has been moved back in favor of holding Paschal Matins in the evening. The more ancient vigil service has a strongly baptismal character, reflecting the period when this sacrament was administered on the eve of Pascha. The texts at Vespers are dominated by the three connected themes of Passover, Resurrection and baptismal initiation. Of the fifteen Old Testament readings (*frequently abbreviated in modern practice – Ed.*) – constituting the final stage in the teaching of catechumens before they were baptized – readings 3, 5, 6 and 10 refer directly or symbolically to the Passover; readings 4, 7, 8, 12 and 15 refer to the Resurrection; and readings 4, 6, 14 and 15 refer symbolically to Baptism. The baptismal character of the Holy Saturday office is likewise apparent in the chant sung in place of the Trisagion, ‘As many of you as were baptized into Christ. . .’, and in the choice of Epistle reading (Rom. 6:3-11). With the verse following the Epistle, ‘Arise, O God. . .’, the celebration of the Resurrection has already begun.

On Holy Saturday evening the people gradually reassemble in the darkened church, waiting for the moment when the priest will come out from the sanctuary with the burning candle that symbolizes the light of Christ. So the period of the Lenten Triodion closes in a spirit of intense and eager expectation. ‘Surely I am coming quickly,’ the Savior says to us (Rev. 22:20), and in our hearts we make ready to reply to the risen Christ: ‘Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!’ (*from The Lenten Triodion, translated by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2002*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9 EOB

Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, rejoice! Let your kindness be known to all. The Lord is at hand! Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are commendable, if there is any virtue or any praise, think about these things. What you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 12:1-18 EOB

At that time, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus (who had been dead and whom he had raised from the dead) lived. Therefore, they gave a supper for him there. Martha served while Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with him. Then Mary took a pound of fragrance of pure nard, very precious; she anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. Then Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, one of his disciples and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" Now, Judas said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the money box, he used to steal what was put into it. But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! She has kept this for the day of my burial. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." Meanwhile, a large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there. They came, not only for Jesus' sake, but also in order to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. The chief priests even conspired to put Lazarus to death as well, because on his account many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believed in him. On the next day, a great multitude had come to the feast. When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took branches from palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" Having found a young donkey, Jesus sat on it. As it is written: "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion! Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt." 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but after Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about him, and that they had done these things to him. Now, the multitude that had been with Jesus when he had called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify about it. For this reason also, the crowd had come out to meet him, because they had heard that he had done this sign.

Homily on Palm Sunday

By Archpriest Rodion Putyatin

"God the Lord has appeared to us, make a feast, and rejoice, let us magnify Christ, with vines and branches, crying out with songs: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord our Savior."

On this day, we, according to the typikon of our Church, are in the habit of holding tree branches and burning candles. With what intention did our Orthodox Church introduce such a custom? Let's say a few words about this for our edification.

Why do we tend to hold branches in our hands today? By this we remember the solemn entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. When the Lord was entering Jerusalem, the people went out to meet Him; some took off their clothes and threw them on the road along which the Lord passed, and some cut palm branches from trees and threw them on the road, filling the air with exclamations: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Thus, we now, holding branches in our hands, appear to meet Jesus Christ, as the people of Jerusalem once met Him. We ourselves, the listeners, will someday actually meet Jesus Christ, only not in the same way that the Jerusalemites met Him. The Jerusalemites saw in Him a meek king sitting on a donkey, and we will see Him coming in the clouds with power and great glory, we will see him as a Judge, terrible for the ungodly. And that is why, holding tree branches in our hands, we remember our future resurrection, our coming to meet the Judge, terrible for the ungodly.

Look at these branches: in winter they were as if dead, without life, but with the onset of spring they came to life again. And we will likewise die, and death will come for us, this harsh winter; but our spring will come, and we will come to life again, and our body, which has decayed in the earth, will again unite with the soul. Looking at the trees in winter, it seems impossible to imagine that they could come to life again, turn green, and yet it happens. Looking at the dead, lowering their bodies into the grave, you think that you have already said goodbye to them forever, and you cannot imagine that their decayed body would ever come to life, rise, and yet it will be so. Such is God's law - He will clothe the corruptible with incorruption and make the dead immortal.

So, holding tree branches in our hands, we express that we are meeting the Lord Jesus Christ. What do burning candles mean now? Why do we hold them in our hands? By this we show our zeal for Jesus Christ, our fiery desire to meet Him. Just as a candle burns in our hands, so does our heart burn with love for Jesus Christ and the desire to meet Him. Oh, when would that be so! Oh, that our hearts would burn with love for Jesus Christ as much as candles burn before holy icons!

But listeners, we can still meet the Lord, and we do not have to go far

to meet Him. He constantly stands at the door of our heart. And therefore, one has only to open these doors, that is, to wish with all one's heart, and He will ascend. And what joy will then be in us! If the May sun suddenly shone on a gloomy, cold winter night, how then everything would revive, everyone would rejoice! This is what happens to the soul of a sinner when the Sun of righteousness, Christ our God, shines in it.

Then there is real paradise in the heart. We, rightly calling ourselves sinners, consider ourselves unworthy for Christ to dwell in us, and therefore many sometimes do not even want to open the doors of their hearts for Him. Ah, listeners, that is why it is necessary to open the doors of hearts, that we are sinners: Jesus Christ will make us righteous. Then it is necessary to hasten to receive Jesus Christ into ourselves, when we have many sins: Jesus Christ will destroy all our sins in us, for He is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2).

Thus, it is only necessary to open the doors of the heart, to express only the desire to meet Jesus Christ, and He will enter. But do we open these doors for Jesus Christ, do we express a desire to meet Him? Alas, the doors of our hearts are all locked, we are all not at home for Jesus Christ; our heart is full of worries about the world, about wealth, about honors, about pleasures, but there is no place for the Lord in it. Indeed. How do we prove that we are glad to meet the Lord coming in our hearts?

When Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem, some of the people took off their clothes and threw them on the road along which the Lord was walking. But what are we, the listeners, throwing up for the Lord? Do we give up those pleasures that He does not love? Are we throwing those things that are unpleasant to Him? What good is it that we made a feast and came to this temple? What good is it that we magnify Christ, calling out: "Blessed is he who comes"?

No, listeners, if we really want to meet the Lord and have Him always in our souls, then we must certainly leave those pleasures that He does not like, and give up those that are unpleasant to Him. And we all know very well what He does not like and what is unpleasant to Him; this is what we are too pleased with and that we love too much, we love to the point of forgetting God.

Christ our Savior! You are always standing at the door of our heart; You expect us to repent. Oh, don't go away, wait more and more; maybe, at last, we will come to our senses, and repent! Amen. (*Translated by John Sanidopoulos*)



A Word From the Holy Fathers

Having completed the forty days that bring profit to our soul, we beseech You in Your love for man: grant us also to behold the Holy Week of Your Passion, that in it we may glorify Your mighty acts and Your ineffable dispensation for our sakes, singing with one mind, “O Lord, glory to You.”

Having completed the forty days that bring profit to our soul, let us cry, “Rejoice, city of Bethany, home of Lazarus. Rejoice, Martha and Mary, his sisters. Tomorrow Christ will come, by His word to bring your dead brother to life. Hearing His voice, bitter hell that is never satisfied will tremble and groan aloud, and it will release Lazarus bound in his grave-clothes. Amazed by this miracle, a multitude of Jews will come to meet Him with palms and branches; though their fathers look on Him with malicious envy, yet shall the children praise Him, saying, “Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel.”

– Stichera from Friday night Vespers (*Lenten Triodion*)

Sermon for the Beginning of Holy Week and the Raising of Lazarus

By Fr. Maximos Constas

By the grace of God, we have completed the Fast, and have now set our foot on the bridge leading from Great Lent to Holy Week.

Holy Week is called “Holy and Great Week,” or simply “Great Week” (Μεγάλη Ἑβδομάς), and is “great,” in the words of St. John Chrysostom, because “great and ineffable mysteries take place during this week.”

This is a time when the whole Church gathers together, when the whole Church celebrates the passion and resurrection of the Lord – and the overture, as it were, the prologue to the week, consists of two feasts: the Raising of Lazarus and Palm Sunday.

These two feasts, like all the feasts of the Church, do not have the primary purpose of recalling a historical event from the past, instead they have a deeper spiritual aspect. These are also days of great grace – but to what extent we experience this grace is up to us – it depends on the degree of our preparation, one how much we prayed, how much we fasted, how much we struggled, how much we loved, so that we might hear what God is saying within us

The raising of Lazarus points to the Church’s faith in the general resurrection of all people – την κοινήν ἀνάστασιν προ του σου πάθους πιστούμενος – and if there is no resurrection of the dead, as St. Paul says, if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is in vain (1 Cor 15:14).

It is hope in the resurrection that enables us to live, that enables us to endure the trials that life brings us – otherwise our life is tragic and futile, because all our works, efforts, and accomplishments will be destroyed by death, swept away by time, as if we had never existed at all.

We have lost the sense of a life lived in the hope and expectation and experience of the resurrection – we’ve limited ourselves to worldly things; we don’t live in the light and perspective of the resurrection.

Most of us are just as troubled, stressed, confused and as lost as everyone else in society, and so people look at us and say, “Christians are no different than we are, why should we become Christian, or believe in Christ?”

To the contrary, St Silouan once said: “Christ, don’t give me more joy, or else my heart will break!” But what do we say? “Christ, don’t give me any more stress, problems, or difficulties, or else my heart will break!” Do you see the difference?

We’ve been going to church for so many years – but do we have this joy within us? If not, we need to seek out the reasons, the causes, and we will discover, as St Maximos the Confessor says, that the cause is that our bond with Christ, our connection with him, is weak.

But even when we are dead, in the very midst of our darkness and death, Christ comes to us, just as He came to the grave of Lazarus. When you hear that He raised Lazarus, and when you hear that He descended into hell to free the souls that were there, don’t think that this is something that happened only a long time ago.

The heart is a tomb, and deep within it are buried our thoughts, and our mind – our intellect, the core of who we are – is buried and imprisoned in heavy darkness. And so Christ comes to those souls who call upon him, who cry out to him, and He descends into the depths of their heart – He removes the heavy stone, the weight that oppresses the soul; He opens the tomb and resurrects us, for we were truly dead, and He leads us out of the darkness and into His own light.

Let us not be like that disciple who did not believe in the resurrection, which means he did not believe in the possibility of his own resurrection, of the resurrection of virtue and knowledge and new life within himself. His name means “double,” for he was double-minded, which means he doubted, and what he doubted was the resurrection of Christ within his heart.

Let us live in the joy and the blessing of the presence of God – the joy of the resurrection, the joy of Pascha – none of us should miss this! – We can’t let Bright Monday be just another day, when we go back to talking about ... the weather, because all the other joys in life fade in comparison to the joy of the resurrection; all the other joys will fade, grow old, break into pieces, slip through our fingers,

and leave us alone and empty – but not this one – just as Christ said: “Now you have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you” (John 16:22).

This is the joy of Pascha! (*from myocn.net*)

New-Martyr George of Ephesus

Sentenced to beheading by the sword O George, with joy you went off to the land of joy.

Holy New Martyr George was born in New Ephesus in 1756 to a father from Samos. He married and had several children. One day in June of 1798, he got drunk and in that state was induced to deny his Orthodox Christian faith and become a Muslim, though he was not circumcised. When he became sober, he felt shame for what he did, so he denounced Islam and fled New Ephesus for Samos.

During his absence, the Orthodox Christians of New Ephesus received permission from the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople to build a church, which was rare in those days. This angered the local Muslims, who accused the Christians of wishing to kill George for his denial of the Orthodox Christian faith and to bury his remains in the foundation of the new church.

Meanwhile, after some time had passed, George was identified on the island of Samos and was forcefully brought back to New Ephesus. Once there, he was circumcised by the Muslims who then made him a custodian of a mosque. Not long after his conscience began to bother him and he sought a way to escape. After ten months, he found an opportunity and sailed to Samos once again. There he divided his time between Samos and the neighboring island of Patmos.

During this time George thought about his deplorable situation and this led him to shed the bitter tears of repentance. After he confessed his sin, he decided he wanted to die for his faith in Christ. He therefore appeared before the Turkish governor of Samos and witnessed for Christ and deprecated the religion of Islam. For this the governor had George beaten and thrown into prison. Shortly afterwards, however, leading Orthodox Christian representatives of Samos were able to use their influence, as well as money, and had George set free.

This prompted George to return to New Ephesus. The first thing he did was send his family away, so they would not become victims of revenge by the fanatical Muslims.

For three days George sat in front of the tree on which the Holy New Martyr Polydoros (Sept. 3) was hanged, thus giving the Muslims an opportunity to see him and bring him before the judge. But nothing happened. So he went to the local coffee house where he hoped his presence would provoke his arrest, but nothing happened again. He therefore decided to put an end to the drama and appeared by

himself before the judge and confessed his faith in Christ. This took place on Wednesday, April 3.

After questioning George, the judge had him bound and taken to prison, where a heavy chain was put around his neck and his feet were put in blocks. After a night of torture, the next night George was asked to pronounce the Islamic declaration (*salabati*), some even promised him money if he did so, while others threatened him. George replied: "I am an Orthodox Christian and I wish to die an Orthodox Christian."

Seeing how steadfast George was in his faith, the torturers squeezed his testicles and tore at his flesh with their nails, hoping that it would cause George to deny his faith, but he did not.

The next day, Friday, George was brought bound to the courtroom, and many gathered for the trial. A mufti said to to him: "Come, my son, just say the proclamation of faith and go wherever you please and be whatever you wish, either Muslim (Turk) or Roman (Orthodox Christian)." George answered: "I am an Orthodox Christian, I want my faith." A Muslim then said: "It is not his fault; it is the fault of their priests who teach them they must return to the place where they denied their faith and confess it." The mufti said: "So let's not hang this one, but let us use the sword on him." then turning to George he asked: "Is ninety-nine greater than a hundred?" "My God, my God, what you ask me even the small children know," George replied.

The mufti asked the question hoping that George would give the wrong answer and then he could be declared mentally unstable and release him. Instead, George was sentenced to be beheaded, and savagely brought to the place of his execution. He knelt down, and the executioner waved his sword in front of his eyes, hoping that it would weaken George's resolve.

One Muslim, feigning an interest in the well being of George, rushed forward and said to the executioner: "What is this you are about to do?" And turning to George he whispered: "Aren't you sorry to lose your life? Only make a declaration and then go and live as you please."

"I am an Orthodox Christian and I am called George. I don't need your advice," was the response. Then the executioner asked him to make the declaration, but George passionately answered: "I am an Orthodox Christian."

Then the executioner asked George to bend his head, which he did with a happy look on his face. Then the executioner struck off the head of George. That night a light shined on his body. On Saturday the judge was informed of this, and ordered two porters, together with some Orthodox Christians, to bury George with his

fellow martyr Polydoros. Meanwhile, many Orthodox Christians took the opportunity to take portions of the relics of the Holy New Martyr George which, with prayer for his intercession, produced many miracles. Among these were hairs from his head and his blood-soaked garments. He became especially known at this time for healing fevers and malaria.

And the miracles continued. According to his biographer Saint Athanasios of Paros (1721-1813), Nicholas Karpathios suffered for many days with pain in his stomach, and after taking all the medication available, he continued to suffer. In despair he went to the tomb of the Saint and prayed there with reverence and tears. The glorious New Martyr of Christ George appeared in a dream of Nicholas, wearing garments similar to those of Saint Panteleimon. The Saint asked him what he wanted while touching the spot where the pain was with a stick, and immediately the pain ceased and he became completely well. For this healing Nicholas glorified and thanked God.

In 1806 the sacred skull of Saint George was brought to Docheiariou Monastery at Mount Athos in an eight-angled silver reliquary. A Divine Service was written for him by Saint Nikephoros of Chios (1750-1821).

Saint George is especially honored on the island of Samos, where he is commonly known as "Saint George the Drunk". The first official commemoration of his feast there took place on Sunday 7 May 1967 led by Metropolitan Panteleimon of Samos and Ithaca (later Metropolitan of Thessaloniki). His commemoration was set for the Fourth Sunday of Pascha until 1995. On 17 May 1970 a foundation stone was placed for the building of a temple in his honor, at the expense of Emmanuel L. Hatzinikolaou, in memory of his mother Kalliopi. The door-opening ceremony took place on the Fourth Sunday of Pascha, 25 May 1975. In 1996 Metropolitan Eusebius changed his feast day to the Fifth Sunday of Pascha.

Apolytikion in the First Tone: Having purified yourself with the streams of your tears George, both your soul and body, you became temperate all-praised one. And inflamed with a desire for Christ, you were persuaded brave one towards martyric struggles and contests like a professional athlete. Glory to Him Who gave you strength, glory to Him Who works wonders through you, glory to Him Who without corruption glorifies you unto the ages.

Kontakion in the Fourth Tone: For your ancestral faith you more than contested for, and glorified Christ by dying for Him, all-blessed Martyr George, and you were given the crown of martyrdom.

Megalynarion: A star from Ephesus has newly appeared, Champion Martyr, truly rising, gleaming with the light of your martyrdom the intellects of those who venerate you. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Virgin-Martyr Ypomoni

Being supported upon great faith, Ypomoni passionately approached the Lord as a bride.

The Holy Virgin Martyr Ypomoni is not officially listed in the calendar of the Church, however she is mentioned in the *Codex 1104 folio 986* of Vatopaidi Monastery, where there is a complete Service devoted to her which was composed by Theophanes. The Canon has the acrostic: "τοὺς σοὺς ἀγῶνας, Ὑπομονή, θαυμάσω" ("I am in awe, Ypomoni, of your struggles").

What we can gather from these hymns is that Saint Ypomoni was a virgin who dedicated her life to Christ, and for her confession of faith in Christ and refusal to worship the idols during one of the early Christian persecutions, she was subjected to tortures. One that is mentioned is that there was an attempt to burn her alive, but the fire was as fresh dew from which she emerged unharmed. We are also informed that she was bound and imprisoned, was suspended on a wooden pole and was lacerated, and that some of her limbs were cut off. Everything she faced, she did with bravery and courage and was steadfast in her faith till the end, having her mind set on her love for Christ and being with her Bridegroom for eternity. There is no exact detail as to how her end came to be, but it seems she finally succumbed to her tortures. In one place she is referred to as a "Great Martyr" for everything that she endured. We are also informed that she has the gift to work healings for those who approach her with faith seeking her intercessions.

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone: Ornament of martyrs, wondrous Ypomoni, for your good testimony you received a crown, all-honorable athlete; having dissolved all the craftiness of Belial, you raised up the Savior by your brave labors, and do now intercede before the Lord on behalf of those who honor you.

Kontakion in Tone 8: As a champion and with your sharp apprehension, you were strengthened by your alliance with Christ, and contested with the power of Christ; but as you were steadfast in your contest, assist us by your intercessions, that we who honor you may obtain salvation.

Oikos: Grant my tongue clarity and my mind Your light, life-giving Savior, to worthily hymn Your bright lamb, for on behalf of her testimony she was given over to tortures, not being attached even to her members, and showed her love towards You till the end; and we due to these honorable contests honor her by joyfully crying out: Rejoice much-contested Virgin Martyr of the Lord, whose perseverance is a rule of being most-manly, most-renowned Ypomoni, you who dwell in the heavens and makes merry with the saints, in a manner worthy of your labors, but intercede that we who honor you may obtain salvation.

Rejoice sun-resembling maiden the beauty of martyrs,
Rejoice dignity of the faith who continued in perseverance,

Rejoice for your contest builds up the faithful,
Rejoice for your resistance tramples on the enemies,
Rejoice glory and boast of your homeland and race,
Rejoice for your bravery is an invitation to the contest,
Rejoice maiden named for steadfastness and the hope of athletes,
Rejoice revered emblem of monastics and ascetics,
Rejoice aroma of the faith the fragrance of Christ,
Rejoice exaltation and boast of those who ever struggle,
Rejoice support and pillar of those shown to be athletes,
Rejoice for your contest brings joy to earth and heaven,
Rejoice for you make ready for salvation those who honor you.
(from johnsanidopoulos.com)

Also Commemorated Today

[Follow the links below for more information. - Ed.]

Martyrs [Theodulus](#), reader, [Agathopodes](#), deacon, & those with them at Thessalonica (303)
Transation of the relics (1652) of [St. Job](#), patriarch of Moscow (1607).
New Hieromartyr Alexis priest (1930).
New Hieromartyr Nicholas Simo, archpriest of Kronstadt (1931).
New Martyrs Monk [Emelian](#) (Efremov) & nun Darya (Kurdyukova) in Orenburg (1931)
Venerable [Publius](#) of Egypt, monk (4th c.).
Venerables Theonas, Symeon, and Phorbinus of Egypt (4th c.).
Venerable [Mark](#) the Anchorite of Athens (400).
Venerable [Plato](#), abbot of the Studion (813).
Venerable [Theodora](#), nun, of Thessalonica (892) (*Greek*).
Repose of [St. Philip](#) the First, metropolitan of Moscow (1473).
[Five girls](#) martyred at Neanidor of Lesbos (*Greek*).
Virgin-martyr [Theodora](#) and Martyr Didymus the Soldier, of Alexandria (304);
The Martyr [Fermus \(or Thermos\)](#) with his [sister](#) and her servant (unk)
New Martyr [Argyra](#) at Constantinople (1725).
New Martyr [Panaghiotis](#) of Jerusalem (1820).
Monk-martyrs of St. David of Gareji Monastery (1616)(Georgia)
St. [Derfel](#) Gadarn of [Llanderfel](#) (5th or 6th c.) (Wales).
Venerable [Ethelburga](#), queen and Abbes of Lyminge, Kent. (c. 647)
Martyrs [Claudius](#), Diodorus, Victor, Victorinus, Pappia, Serapion, and Nicephorus
Martyrs [Terence](#), Africanus, Maximus, Pompeius and 36 others
[Martyrs](#) of North Africa killed by Vandals during the Paschal Liturgy (459)
New Nun-Martyr [Maria](#) of Gatchina;
St. [Becan](#), abbot at Westmeath (6th c.)(Ireland)
Sts. Probus and Grace (unk) (husband & wife from Wales)

Pray for our priests and seminarians!

Prayer is powerful, and we need more priests in our Diocese. Metropolitan Gregory is asking that each one of us pray daily that we have more vocations to the priesthood. He also wants us to pray by name for our clergy and seminarians--they aren't sick! The clergy that we are to pray for are: Fr. Kevin Greenwood, Fr. Andrew Gromm, and Deacon Donald Koch. The seminarians are: Fr. Peter Sodini, Deacon Maximus Cannaverde, Fr. Alexander Hurtsellers, Bradley Shaffer, Nicholas Cizin, John Bonnewicz-Coffey, John Fedornock III, Clay Raburn, Spyridon Raburn and Ignatios Leonardo (please also pray for Joshua Horner, who is taking a break from seminary to work full-time). We started this four years ago, and we already see its fruit – Fr. Seamus was on this list the last time I ran it!

Prayer for vocations

Master of all, You promised us, “I will be with you always, even until the very end of the world,” and You have taught, “I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Mindful of this pledge, we beseech Your great goodness to inspire men to the Holy Priesthood, the service of Your Holy Orthodox Church, so that she may properly be able to fulfill Your will for Your people in this age. There are children to baptize, the sick to heal, and the dying to care for. There is the Bread of Life to distribute, and the Word of God to teach. There are sins to forgive, and charity to be done in Your Name. Send Your Church in this hour and in every age “vessels of clay” to be instruments of Your presence. Hear us, O Lord, and have mercy.

Prayer for the priesthood

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Metropolitan Gregory, and our spiritual father Seamus, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Remember also, O Lord, our priests Fr. Kevin Greenwood, Fr. Andrew Gromm, and Deacon Donald Koch, and seminarians Fr. Peter Sodini, Deacon Maximus Cannaverde, Fr. Alexander Hurtsellers, Bradley Shaffer, Nicholas Cizin, John Bonnewicz-Coffey, John Fedornock III, Spyridon Raburn, Clay Wood and Ignatios Leonardo. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God who loves us, and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Parish Services This Week

After Social tomorrow: Bridegroom Matins (1:30 PM)

6th | Great and Holy Monday | Bridegroom Matins 6:30 PM

7th | Great and Holy Tuesday | Bridegroom Matins 6:30 PM

8th | Great and Holy Wednesday | Service of Holy Unction 6:30 PM

9th | Great and Holy Thursday | Vespertal Liturgy 9 AM

Passion Gospels 6:30 PM

10th | Great and Holy Friday | Royal Hours 9 AM

Vespers and Burial Service with the Lamentations 7 PM

11th | Great and Holy Saturday Vespertal Liturgy with baptisms & chrismations 10 AM

Resurrection Matins 7:30 PM

12th | Great and Holy Pascha | Divine Liturgy 10 AM

13th | Bright Monday | Paschal Matins 9:15 AM | Divine Liturgy 10 AM

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Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

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You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Seamus & Family, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Eldoret and Northern Kenya, Patty Blaydoe, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Tina Crull, Marlene Doukas, Alaina Espinal, Angelo Espinal, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, John M. Janowiak, Johnson family, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Dennis Thomidis, Fr. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine & the Middle East, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Seamus of changes.)