



**St. Nicholas
Orthodox Church**

102 Ross Avenue
San Anselmo, CA
94960

(415) 454-0982

Orthodox Church
in America

Diocese of the West

Fr. Stephan Meholick,

Pastor

Protodeacon George Golitzin

stnicholasmarin.org



*Make peace with yourself,
and heaven and earth make
peace with you... Cast off the
burden of sin and you will
find within you the upward
path that will make your
ascent possible.*

*Nothing happens accidentally
or in such a way that you
cannot learn from it; you
must understand this at once,
for this is how your trust
grows in the Lord whom you
have chosen to follow.*

*If you wish to save your soul
and win eternal life, arise
moment by moment from your
dullness, bless yourself with
the sign of the Cross: Let me
Lord, make a good beginning,
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit. Amen.*

- Tito Colliander
Way of the Ascetics



ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

April 2025

Great Lent – Part II

Having reached the middle of the sea of abstinence, let us look towards the haven of salvation, the season of Thy voluntary Passion, O Lord. In Thy lovingkindness and Thy mercy, grant us also to behold in peace the day of Thy glorious Resurrection!

We sing this verse this year on March 26, the “mid-point” between Forgiveness Sunday and Pascha. The first part of Lent was aimed chiefly at our purification. On Wednesday night, April 2, this effort reaches its final summation at the reading of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete. After this, the tone of the Lenten services begins to change. We are made to realize that this purification was not an end in itself. It must lead us ultimately to the *contemplation*, the *comprehension* and finally the *appropriation* of the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the Way to Bethany and Jerusalem

On Sunday, April 6 we hear the words of Jesus, “Now we are going up to Jerusalem...”

The entire week (April 7-11) is spent in the contemplation of the forthcoming encounter between *Christ* and *Death*—first in the person of His friend Lazarus, then in His own death.

On Friday April 11, Lent comes to an end as we sing, “Grant us to behold the week of Thy Holy Pas-

sion, for we have completed the forty days of the Fast.”

A Power in My Life

On Lazarus Saturday (April 12), we enter into the special and sacred time of Holy Week and Pascha. Each and every one of us is called to truly “lay aside all earthly cares,” i.e., all activities and concerns that distract from the great mystery which is happening **for** us and **to** us. It must be an experience which transcends the fulfilling of an annual religious obligation or custom. It is more than a beautiful “tableau” which emotionally uplifts us.

Holy Week and Pascha must make present a power which affects everything in my life – my self-perception, my relationships with others, the world around me, my calling in life, my possessions, my body and my health, and finally my own impending death.

This is none other than “*the power of God unto salvation for everyone who has faith.*” (Romans 1:16)

Pastoral Reflections

concerning Confession during Lent

One of the essential aspects of the Lenten journey is the Sacrament of Penance. This is the season of repentance and therefore every Orthodox Christian prepares to make a good confession during these days. I'm addressing this again because so many of us tend to procrastinate, not realizing the tremendous pressure this puts on the parish priest during the busiest time of the year.

So...once again: **Please make every effort to come to confession during the 40 days of Lent which end this year on April 11, the eve of Lazarus Saturday. Holy Week is reserved only for emergencies, catechumens and students and pilgrims returning home for Pascha.**

Now, some practical considerations. When I do come during these days, what should I say? What should I not say? When is the best time to come?

First of all, a good rule of thumb is to confess your **own** sins without elaborate explanations or rationalizations. Another very important consideration is if there is a need to discuss anything at length, it would be better to schedule a time when there is not a queue of penitents. We all need that venue at certain times, but it's better to request a confession by appointment which is convenient both for you and the priest. These few weeks are definitely not the time to ruminate on various problems of the past week or to have a "spiritual chat."

I can't stress enough how important it is to actually set aside time to prepare for this Sacred Mystery. Actually, Great Lent itself should be a huge part of this process. Personally I find it helpful to first look at a printed "examination of conscience" in order to prepare myself for this Holy Sacrament. I highly recommend two booklets: *Preparing for Confession* by L. Joseph Letendre and *If We Confess Our Sins* by Fr. Thomas Hopko. They are both available in the parish bookstore. I can provide you with an electronic copy of the latter if you email me at svyatnikolai@yahoo.com.

However, just reading something from someone else's list is not the best alternative. Making your own list as a reminder can be a very helpful tool, ever mindful that true repentance comes from the depth of one's heart and said in one's own words.

- Fr. Stephan

Clean Up Day

Church, Church Hall and Grounds

Thursday, April 10th - 9am - 3pm

Volunteers will meet in the Parish Hall to receive assignments.

During these holy days we are reminded by our Lord Himself to "first clean the inside of the cup" (Matt. 23:26.) As a part of our Lenten tithe to increase prayer, fasting and almsgiving, an absolute priority is given to worship. Nevertheless, the "outside of the cup" has to be cleaned as well.

We need all hands on deck this month to help with cleaning, decorating, general preparations and "after the party" clean-up.

The Pascha of The Lord

By Father Alexander Schmemmann

All Christianity is the experience of faith repeated again and again as if for the first time, through its incarnation in rites, words, music, and colors. To the unbeliever, it may indeed seem like a mirage; he sees only incomprehensible ceremonies, and he understands them only outwardly. But for believers, all of this radiates from within, and not as proof of his faith, but as its result, as its life in the world, in the soul, in history. Therefore the darkness and sadness of Holy Friday is for us something real, alive, contemporary; we can cry at the cross and experience everything that took place in that triumph of evil, treachery, cowardice, and betrayal; we can contemplate the life-bearing tomb on Holy Saturday with excitement and hope. And therefore, every year we can celebrate Easter, Pascha, the Resurrection. For Easter is not the remembrance of an event in the past. It is the real encounter in happiness and joy, with Him whom our hearts long ago knew and encountered as the life and light of all light. Easter night testifies that Christ is alive and with us, and that we are alive in Him.

The entire celebration is an invitation to look at the world and life, and to behold the dawning of the mystical day of the Kingdom of light. "Today the air is filled with the fragrance of Spring," sings the church, "and all creation rejoices in its renewal..." It rejoices in faith, in love and in hope.

Holy Week and Bright Week Schedule of Services

Lazarus Saturday, April 12

Divine Liturgy, 9:30 am

Palm Sunday Vigil- blessing of palms and willows, 6:00 pm

Palm Sunday, April 13

Divine Liturgy, 9:30 am

Vespers and Bridegroom Matins, 6:00 pm

Great and Holy Monday, April 14

Bridegroom Matins, 7:00 pm

"Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight..."

Great and Holy Tuesday, April 15

Lenten Hours and Gospel, 5:15 pm

Presanctified and lenten meal, 6:00 pm (*Hymn of Cassia*)

Great and Holy Wednesday, April 16

Matins 7:00 pm

Great and Holy Thursday, April 17

Divine Liturgy (Institution of the Eucharist), 10:30 am

Matins (12 Passion Gospels), 7:00 pm

Great and Holy Friday, April 18

Royal Hours, 9:00 am

Vespers and bringing out of the Holy Shroud, 2:00 pm

Jerusalem Matins with Lamentations and Procession, 7:00 pm

Great and Holy Saturday, The Great Vigil of Pascha, April 19

Reception of Catechumens, Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 11:00 am

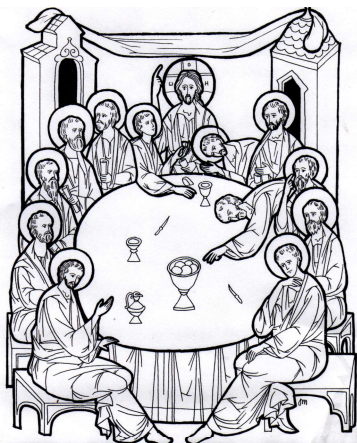
Nocturns and removal of the Holy Shroud, 11:15 pm

Great and Holy Pascha - The Feast of Feasts, April 20

Procession, Paschal Matins and Divine Liturgy, 12:00 midnight

(followed by blessing of foods now permitted to be eaten and parish Agape Festal Meal)

Vespers of Pascha, 1:30 pm



Holy Communion

To truly celebrate Pascha is to partake of Holy Communion at the Divine Liturgy that blessed night. Christ Himself is the *Paschal Lamb* who was slain for the sins of the world. To "eat of the Pascha" then is not to eat of blessed bread or cheese (kulich and syrnaya pascha) but to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. If you have made a sincere confession and repented of your sins during Lent, then abstain from all food and drink from sunset on Holy Saturday, hear the sermon of St. John Chrysostom and prepare to receive.