

Parish Offerings – 5th Sunday of The Great Fast — March 21, 2021

“Everyone must give according to whatever he has inwardly decided; not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor 9:7)

Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks

Regular Offering (\$1,877.20) YP (\$10)	\$1,887.20
Holy Days (\$216) Easter (\$105)	321.00
Easter Décor	442.00
Votive Candles	94.50
	\$2,744.70

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$908.00
Holy Days (\$45) Easter Décor (\$120)	165.00
Initial (\$5) B.C.W. (\$14) Utilities (\$10) Improvement (\$30)	59.00
Votive Candles	58.00

Church Attendance Last Week \$1,190.00

Sat (MR), 4:00 p.m. (41); Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (50); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (23)

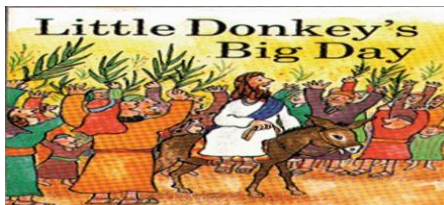
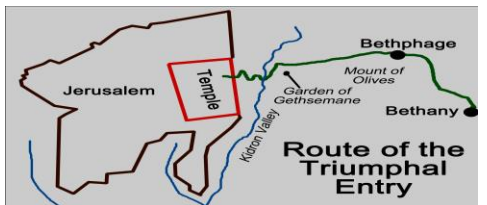
V Sunday Penitential Vespers — (MR) 3:00 p.m. (12)

Feast of the Annunciation — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (12); (NS) 6:00 p.m. (10)

Presanctified Divine Liturgy

VI Lenten: Wednesday — (MR) 7:00 pm (16); Friday — (NS) 6:00 pm (N/A)

Lazarus Saturday — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (N/A)

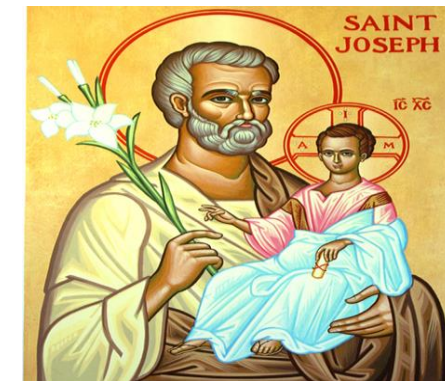


HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

**225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE**

**McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212**

**THE ROYAL ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM
Palm (Flowery) Sunday — March 28, 2021**



2020 – Year of St. Joseph – 2021

Catholics of the Ruthenian – Byzantine Rite in full communion with the Pope of Rome

The Very Reverend Father Frank A. Firko

Pastor, Administrator & Protopresbyter

The Reverend Deacon Michael E. Meaders (NS)

Rectory: (412) 771-3324; Church Fax: (412) 331-1870

MR School Hall Kitchen: (412) 331-5155

Web-site: www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org – E-Mail: ffaf334@verizon.net

SUNDAY RADIO (9:00 am WEDO 810 AM) & INTERNET DIVINE LITURGY

Liturgical Services LIVE: www.Youtube.com then type: Holy Ghost Church Live Stream

Valerian F. Szal
238 Helen St.,
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
Phone: (412) 331-9713
331-9713
Fax: (412) 331-6688
Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP
Ill Serving Yours Since 1953

HOLY WEEK
THE WEEK THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

DESIGNS BY NANCY
235 McCartney Drive,
Moon Township 15108
Phone: (412) 580-1545
Nancde@aol.com
Nancy C. Debranski
Sewing, Alterations, Custom Embroidery and Unique Gifts

Sunday Divine Liturgies
Saturday (MR) 4:00 pm
Sunday (MR) 9:00 am
Holy Ghost (NS) 11:00 a.m.

Holy Day Divine Liturgies w/Great Vespers (Oblig)
(MR): 7:00 pm
Holy Day (MR) 9:00 am; (NS) 6:00 pm

Daily Divine Liturgy
M-F (MR) 8:00 am
Sat. (NS) 9:00 am.

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation: Sat (MR): 3:15 to 3:40 pm & Sun (MR) 8:15 to 8:40 am.; (NS) 10:30 am

Holy Mysteries of Initiation: Contact Church Office for Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist.

Holy Mysteries of Anointing: Ask especially prior to surgery or any other time.

Holy Mystery of Matrimony: Contact pastor one year in advance; Pre-Cana Classes required.

Sponsor of Christian Initiation: Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Religious Education Classes: (MR) Coordinator: Steve Puluka (412) 897- 4650.

GCU Lodge 390: (MR) Contact Tina Burns (412) 859-9597 for membership requirements.

Slavjane Folk Ensemble: (MR) Membership requirements contact Bob Bartko: (412) 779-0915.

Carpatho-Rusyn Radio: Internet Sunday afternoon: Rusyn.fm at 3:30 pm. Archive: c-rsmedia.org.

New & Returning Parishioners: Welcome! Please register by phoning the Church Office.

Remember the Church in Your Will: Please be so kind to remember the Church in your last will and testament. This helps to secure its future & a Byzantine Catholic witness to all!

GCU
Greek Catholic Union of the USA
A Fraternal Benefit Society
NWPL offers Insurance and Annuity Benefits greater than most financial institutions. Info call Tina (412) 859-9597

This space available for ads for wishing someone birthday or anniversary greetings, get-well wishes, etc. Call the office

Please patronize our fabulous sponsors! They make it possible to bring you this weekly & informative S.O.T. without an added expense to the Church. New Sponsors please contact Church Office

Come Join Us

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

March 28, 2021

Seasonal Greeting:

Volume XI Number 13



Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu!! — Slava Na Viki!



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date	Time	Intention	Requested By
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ROYAL ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Palm (Flowery) Sunday — Solemn Blessing of Palms & Willows

SUN., Mar 28 *** 8:45 a.m. (MR) + Joyce Buchko (birthday 3/26) Sister: Peggy McCusker
*** 10:45 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes
3:00 p.m. (MR) Passion Week Vespers



HOLY (PASSION) WEEK

Holy Mon, Mar 29 8:00 a.m. (MR) Bridegroom Matins
6:30 p.m. (MR) Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary; 7:00 p.m. (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy

Holy Tue, Mar 30 8:00 a.m. (MR) Bridegroom Matins
*** 5:15 p.m. (NS) Special Confession Time
6:00 p.m. (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy



REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat)



Holy Wed, Mar 31 8:00 a.m. (MR) Bridegroom Matins
6:30 p.m. (MR) Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary; 7:00 p.m. (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy

Institution of the Most Holy Eucharist



HOLY THRS, APR 1 8:00 a.m. (MR) Betrayal Matins
7:00 p.m. (MR) Great Vespers w/St. Basil Divine Liturgy



REQUIRED STRICT ABSTINENCE (no meat and dairy products)

HOLY & GREAT FRI, APR 2 8:00 a.m. (MR) Passion Matins w/12 Passions Gospels
12:00 nn. (MR) Royal 6TH Hour: Commemoration of Our Lord's Crucifixion
5:00 p.m. (NS) Entombment Vespers & Procession
7:00 p.m. (MR) Entombment Vespers & Procession



24 Hour Continuous Vigil Before The Tomb — (MR) Church Opened For Devotion

RECOMMENDED Simple Abstinence (no meat) on Holy Saturday

HOLY SAT, APR 3 8:00 a.m. (MR) Sepulcher Matins w/Procession indoors
2:00 p.m. (MR) Great Vespers w/St. Basil Divine Liturgy

Anticipated Resurrectional (Easter Sunday) Liturgical Services

5:45 p.m. (NS) Resurrectional Matins & Blessing of Paschal Foods in Church.
7:45 p.m. (MR) Resurrectional Matins w/ Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Paschal Foods

RADIANT RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Easter (PASCHA) Sunday — The Great Day — MIROVANIJE

SUN., APR 4 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Michael P. Harsh (1st ann of pass. 4/1) Children
11:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes



General Announcements

All Birthdays will be published in SOT each week so that prayers may be offered on these special occasions. Please advise the Church office if your special day does not appear or if you wish your name and date not be published.

Note: Capitalized Names designate North Side parishioners

Mar 28 – LEAH TRAPL; Apr 2 – Russell Sidun; Apr 3 – Beverly Harsh.

Pray for the Ill, Infirm & Shut-ins of Our Parishes

HOME: Margaret Belionas, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, MARY ANN CONTI, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, OLGA MANFREDO, Irene Muha, Michael Muska, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Lisa Plutto, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko, Nancy (Shanta) Wauthier.

MAPLEWOOD PC HOME (461 Maplewood Ave. Ambridge, PA 15003): Doris Naughton.
HIGHLAND PARK CARE CENTER (745 North Highland Ave., Pgh, PA 15206): Linda Reiger.
CHIPPEWA PLACE (7005 Stadium Dr., Apt 427, Brecksville, OH 44141): Stephen Katrenich.
FAIR OAKS ASSISTED LIVING (2200 W. Liberty Ave., Pgh, 15226): ANNA MARIE DEMIANCZYK.
LUTHERAN SENIORLIFE (500 Wittenberg Way, Mars PA 16046): William Zavidny.
LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR (1028 Benton Ave., PGH 15212): MARY SAHAYDA.
VETERANS HOSPITAL (1010 Delafield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15215): JOHN VEREB.
ASBURY HEIGHTS (700 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243): Helen Hopey.
THE RESIDENCE AT WILLOW LANE (30 Heckel Rd., MR, PA 15136): Helen Best, Marge Cifruk.
ST. CLAIR HOSPITAL (1000 Bower Hill Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15243): Anna May Sejka.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. I asked for the anointing of the sick for my very ill baby, but the priest said that the sacrament is only for people older than six years old. I thought the main purpose of this sacrament was for physical healing and the forgiveness of any sins. If so, why was my child refused the sacrament? A. **Catholic Answers Apologist:** Anointing of the sick primarily is for spiritual healing. Physical healing might occur, but it is not the main purpose of the sacrament. Certainly, the sacrament should not be expected to automatically cure the sick person. Such an expectation tends toward superstition (cf. CCC 2111). Baptized children below the age of reason cannot commit personal sin and so do not need anointing of the sick if they are in danger of death.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

Continue to burn before the real presence of our Lord, God & Savior Jesus

Mar. 28 — Apr. 3, 2021

(MR): In Thanksgiving (65th Wedding Anniversary 2/17)

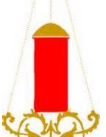
offered by Norma & Peter Kacsur

(NS): In memory of David Allen Voelker

(MR) None available 2021

offered by Bernetta Voelker

(NS) None available 2021



General Announcements

(MR) ECF HOLDS EGG HUNT TODAY — Our Eastern Christian Formation Religious Program is sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt today **Palm Sunday, March 28**. It is for our children from Pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade. Psunky Paschal Eggs remind us of the New Life coming forth from the shell symbolizing Christ breaking forth from the tomb!

(MR) YOUTH GROUP CONTINUES CANDY RAISING PROJECT — In 2021 we are hoping to send 7 teens and 2 chaperones to Mt. St. Mary's University in Maryland. In order to defray the cost, the Holy Ghost Youth Group continues a virtual fundraiser from Sarris Candies. The fundraiser is in effect now and continues until

March 29. This is a contactless fundraiser and all purchases will be shipped directly to the buyer with a \$5 packaging charge per order.. You can purchase anything from the company and we will receive 25% of the sale. Just follow these steps and candy will be on the way. Go to the "fundraising" tab.

3. Our **group code is 10-3617**.

4. You do not have to put in a teen's name unless you want to.

5. Shop! — Thank you so much for your help! Holy Ghost Byzan-Teen Youth Group

(MR & NS) GRATITUDE TO ALL WILLOW CONTRIBUTORS — Although the trees on the Church property produced an average amount of willows this year, we are grateful to all who came forward with extras. Willows maintain a Byzantine Catholic tradition!! God Bless you!!!

(MR) GRATITUDE TO OUR PIROHI WORKERS — Where did the weeks go? Special Thanks to all who came out faithfully every week during this Covid-19 situation to see this Project through! God bless you for sacrificing your time and effort!

(MR) MEN HOLDING CANDLES FOR 12 GOSPELS — First of all thank you to all who accepted the penitential task of standing with candles for the proclamation of the Passion Gospels on Holy and Great Friday Morning! We still need 5 more men to fulfill this task. *You are asked to meet in the priest's sacristy no later than 7:45 a.m. on Great Friday morning. This service is app. 1 ¾ hours in length. May Our Lord bless you for the love and appreciation of His sacrifice that you are making. These sentiments are extended to all in attendance!*

(MR) SPARKLING GRATITUDE EXTENDED — No ocular shades needed inside the Church even though the lighting is brighter! The chandeliers received a recent cleaning by an anonymous illuminator. They look magnificence and will add to our upcoming Paschal Celebration! God bless you for your sacrifice!

(NS) WOW! AN ANONYMOUS DONOR COMES THROUGH — Recently, the North Side Parish had to replace an extended boiler pipe underneath the Church. As reported in the March 14 edition of the S.O.T., both the parts and labor totaled \$1,965.00. An anonymous donor contributed \$1,500 towards this project. We are very grateful for this person's generosity. In behalf of the entire parish, we say "thank you," and pray that God will extend His Mercy and Blessings to you for this sacrificial donation.

Sanctification of Paschal Foods

(MR & NS) REQUESTING ALL HOUSEHOLDS TO BRING AN EASTER BASKET — Following the Resurrectional Matins/Divine Liturgy on Holy Saturday Evening and Easter Sunday Morning, Paschal Foods will be solemnly blessed. **All households are highly recommended to bring an Easter Basket with some traditional foods (cf. insert in last week's S.O.T.). Special Paschal blessings are bestowed upon them** so please don't deprive yourself or your family and friends of God's blessing as you partake of this sanctified food in the joy of the Radiant Resurrection of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.



PALM (FLOWERY) SUNDAY

Significance of Palms & Pussy Willows in Byzantine Rite (John 12: 1 – 18)

The Triumphal Entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem before His Passion was celebrated with particular solemnity since the first centuries of Christianity. In the Byzantine



Rite it is considered one of the twelve Major Feasts of the liturgical year. Its official name is the "**Royal Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem.**" It is always celebrated on the Sunday before Easter with the solemn blessing of branches (Palms, Willows & Olive Branches). Popularly it was also called Willow Sunday (*Verbna Ned'Ilja*) because in Europe, pussy-willows were blessed instead of palms. It is also known as Flowery Sunday (*Cvitna Ned'Ilja*) since in and near

Constantinople they used to distribute early spring flowers, such as branches of lilac or elder, to the faithful, (cf. Constantine Proph. in P.G. 112, 412). From ancient times, **Palm-branches were symbols of victory and triumph.** The Romans used to reward their champions of the games with palm-branches. Also, military triumphs, i.e., the celebrations of victory, were observed with palms. It seems that the Jews followed the same custom (Lev. 23:40; 1 Mace. 13:37) of carrying palm-branches on their festive occasions. That is what happened during the solemn entry of Jesus into the Holy City before His last Passover (Jn. 12:13), **Pussy Willows signify 'new life'** and **Olive Branches signify "peace."** In the New Testament, the palm-branches become a symbol of martyrdom (Rev. 7:9) meaning victory over death. For this reason, in Christian art martyrs were usually represented with palms in their hands. Thus, since the end of the fourth century, the palm-branch also became a symbol of the Resurrection. (P.G. 33, 1025-1028). Jesus Christ, after raising Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-44), was finally recognized by the Jewish people as their Messiah. When He arrived in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, they greeted Him with a triumphant welcome. The Evangelist, however, hastened to remark that it was done in fulfillment of a prophecy (Mt. 21:4-5).

FINAL DAYS OF CHRIST THE BRIDEGROOM

The **first three weekdays of Holy Week** centers its theme upon **Christ the Bridegroom.** The special Matins services offered a commemoration of the last days in the earthly life of the Lord are recounted. We are vicariously present as Christ presents His last teaching discourse to the disciples. As such, these services incorporate readings and hymns inspiring this theme. The mood of the services is to experience sorrow and to feel Christ's voluntary submission to His passions and highlight the purpose behind the evil that is about to take place against the Lord. The atmosphere is one of mourning (for sins) and is symbolic of the shame the Christian should feel for the Fall of Adam and Eve, the depths of hell, the lost Paradise and the absence of God. The main emphasis of the Bridegroom Matins is metanoia (a complete change of direction in following Christ) and each service has its own particular theme of repentance and watchfulness. One of its primary features is its Troparion: *Behold, the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night, and blessed is the servant He shall find vigilant; but unworthy is he whom He shall find neglectful. Beware awake therefore, O my soul, lest you be weighed down by sleep, and be given over to death and be closed out from the kingdom; rise up crying out: Holy! Holy! Holy are You our God; through the intercession of the Theotokos, have mercy on us."*



Calendar of Upcoming Events Including Holy Week & Easter

March 28 Palm (Flowery) Sunday — All weekend Divine Liturgies commence 15 minutes earlier for Solemn Blessing of Palms & Pussy Willows. Passion Vespers inaugurating Holy Week @ 3:00 p.m. preceded by Confessions.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

March 29 through April 3

Great & Holy Monday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Tuesday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m.
..... (NS) Confessions @ 5:15 a.m.
Great & Holy Wednesday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Thursday ... (MR) Betrayal Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Vespers & St. Basil Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Friday . (MR) Passion Matins w/12 Passion Gospels @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR) Royal Hours @ 12:00 noon.

**(MR) CHURCH WILL REMAIN OPEN FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL 3:00 pm
FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION**

(NS) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 5:00 p.m. & (MR) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 7:00 p.m.

ALL NIGHT VIGIL BEFORE THE TOMB (Please Signup)

Great & Holy Sat. (MR) Sepulcher (Jerusalem) Matins w/Procession @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR) Great Vespers w/St. Basil Vigil Divine Liturgy @ 2:00 p.m. — **(NS) Resurrectional Matins @ 5:45 pm. & Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods in Church** — (MR) Resurrectional Matins & Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom @ 7:45 p.m. followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods on Vehicles.

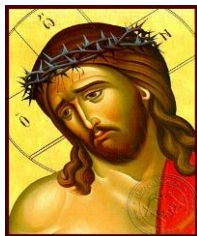
APRIL 4 – EASTER SUNDAY — THE RADIANT RESURRECTION — THE GREAT DAY
(MR) 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods on Vehicles — **(NS) 11:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods in Church.**

BRIGHT WEEK

* **The Bright Hours will be celebrated at the Empty Tomb 15 minutes before each Bright Week Divine Liturgy**
April 5 Bright Monday w/procession (Solemn): (MR) Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 a.m. & (NS) @ 6:00 p.m.
April 6 Bright Tuesday (Simple): (MR) Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 a.m. & (NS) @ 6:00 p.m.
Bright Wednesday through Saturday: (MR) All Morning Divine Liturgies in Main Church

Holy Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday The Final Presanctified Divine Liturgies

On the evening of these first three days of Holy Week the Presanctified Divine Liturgy is celebrated. The Church calls us to begin our preparation for the forthcoming passion, death and burial of Our Lord Jesus and to accompany Him to the consummation of the redemptive acts by which salvation was secured for us. Let us use this time wisely and manifest our loyalty to Him Who now approaches the Holy Passion and join Him as He affects our salvation. Of the several parables that we will hear proclaimed in the Gospel, the one concerning the "wise and Foolish virgins is particularly important. It teaches us that we must always be prepared to meet the Bridegroom Christ whenever He decides to come for us!



Explanation of Holy Week Services **Holy & Great Thursday**

Institution of the Most Holy Eucharist

At the Mystical Supper in the Upper Room Jesus gave a radically new meaning to the food and drink of the sacred meal. He *identified Himself with the bread and wine: "Take, eat; this is my Body. Drink of it all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant"* enacts sacramentally the redemptive event of the Cross and participates in its saving grace. This does not suggest that the Eucharist attempts to reclaim a past event. The Eucharist does not repeat what cannot be repeated. Christ is not slain anew and repeatedly. Rather the Eucharistic food is changed concretely and truly into the Body and Blood of the Lamb of God, "Who gave Himself up for the life of the world." Christ continually offers Himself to the faithful through these consecrated Gifts. In the Eucharist we receive and partake of the Resurrected Christ. We share in His sacrificed, risen and deified Body, "for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting" (Divine Liturgy). Make this an important event to attend rendering thanks for the Holy Eucharist. How precious our Byzantine Catholic Church truly is! This is a great opportunity to fulfill your Easter Duty Precept!



Holy & Great Friday

The Passion, Death & Entombment of Our Lord

Praying that you will join us for this historical and inspiring salvific event! On this day of **STRICT ABSTINENCE (no meat or dairy products)** is permitted as we commemorate 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. Great Friday and Holy Saturday direct our attention to the trial, crucifixion, death and burial of Christ. We are placed within the awesome mystery of the extreme humility of our suffering God. Therefore, these days are at once days of deep gloom as well as watchful expectation. The Author of life is at work transforming death into life: "Come, let us see our Life (Jesus) lying in the tomb, that he may give life to those that in their tombs lying dead" (Sticheron of Great Saturday). Near the end of the Entombment Vespers the **Armathean Procession** occurs with the Burial Shroud (Plaschanica) taken in procession around the Church by the priest and faithful. Near its conclusion, it is placed in the tomb near the front of the Church. It remains there for all night veneration.



Holy & Great Saturday

SEPULCHER MATINS & GREAT VESPERS w/ST. BASIL

Holy Saturday morning prayer of the **Sepulcher (Jerusalem) Matins with an inside procession** commemorates Our Lord's descent into Hades to rescue the Holy & Just and takes them to the New Jerusalem (Heaven). The afternoon celebrates **Great Vespers & St. Basil Divine Liturgy** which is the initial commencement of Our Lord's Radiant Resurrection. The dark coverings and Priestly vestments are changed to bright colors announcing the destruction of death and the introduction of New Life. Let us be with our Lord by participating in these moving ceremonies! (cf. liturgical schedule for times).