



Christ is Risen!

St. Michael's Paschal Bee, May 2, 2021

St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Binghamton, NY

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Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!

Bright Monday, May 3

**Paschal Divine Liturgy, 9 AM*

*Procession follows with Gospels
of the Resurrection*

**Community Grab and Go Dinner,
5:30-7 PM, St. Michael's Center*

Bright Tuesday, May 4

**Paschal Divine Liturgy, 9 AM*

Bright Wednesday, May 5

**Prayer of Resurrection Matins, 9 AM*

Bright Thursday, May 6

**Moleben to Theotokos, 9 AM*

**CHOW Pantry, 4:30-6 PM
Lower Lounge of Center*

Bright Friday, May 7

**Paschal Divine Liturgy, 8 AM
prayers for all who are ill*

**Confessions for the members of
this year's First Confessions Class, 5 PM*

St. Thomas Sunday and Mother's Day May 9

**Divine Liturgy, 9 AM*

**Reception for First Confession Class,*

**Mother's Day Coffee Hour*



Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and to those in the tombs,
bestowing life!

Scripture Readings for the Week of the Resurrection!

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|------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday: | Acts 1: 1-8, 21-28 | St. John 1: 1-17 |
| Monday: | Acts 1: 12-27 | St. John 1: 18-26 |
| Tuesday: | Acts 2: 14-21 | St. Luke 24: 12-36 |
| Wednesday: | Acts 2: 22-36 | St. John 1: 35-51 |
| Thursday: | Acts 2: 38-43 | St. John 3: 1-15 |
| Friday: | Acts 12: 1-11 | St. John 15: 17-16:2 |
| Saturday: | Acts 3: 11-16 | St. John 3: 22-33 |
| Sunday: | Acts 5: 12-20 | St. John 20: 19-31 |

You can log onto www.acrod.org to access the daily readings



Epistle Reading: Acts 1:1-8

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

"for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, " Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Gospel Reading: John 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me for He was before me.

And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

Paschal Greetings of joy to:

His All Holiness, Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople in these days of crisis and conflict our COVID-19 world and his words of hope and inspiration during this Paschal season;

His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa, as he shares if the joy of the Resurrection of Our Lord in his service to the Holy People of God and our Diocesan parish;

Fr. Deacon Charles and Pani Sally Ellis for his faithful and dedicated service to our parish family since his ordination to the Diaconate during Theophany at Christ the Saviour Cathedral in January, 2011;

Our "COVID-19" Cantor, Dave Dervay, for his dedication, sacrifice, faithfulness and love in beautifully singing our Sunday and daily services during these critical days of the COVID-19 Crisis. Thanks also for the help from Theresa Koast, Maria Korchak, Sandy Kostun, Ernie Flamik and all who add their voices in 'making a joyful sound to the Lord.'

Our Seminarian Dylan Kelemecz, a third year theological student at Christ the Saviour Seminary;

Randy May and the members of our Parish Council for their faithful and dedicated service to Our Lord and the People of God in our parish family and their efforts to help protect all of our faithful while maintaining the operation of our church during the pandemic;

Barbara Knighton, coordinator, and all who assist in preparing and hosting our Monday Community 'Grab and Go' Meal program on Mondays, and our CHOW pantry on Thursdays

Our pirohi chairman, Randy May, and all of our volunteers who helped with our Lenten Pirohi Project this spring, together with our new Steel Baba Pirohi Pinching machine;

Rick Dutko, our Church School Principal, to Maria Korchak for her in-class and ZOOM outreach to our younger students, and all who have helped in any way with our parish religious educational program during these challenging COVID-12 months.

Our School Guild officers, Valerie Augenstern, Eve Allan, Natasha Gdovin and Bonnie Delahanty, together with the parents and friends of our School Guild during these challenging days of the Pandemic that has touched many.



Sandie Koytek, Tricia Carman and Randy May for overseeing the +*Msgr. Stephen and Pani Mary Dutko scholarship program*, the Popp scholarship, and the Carl Paccio/Mark DelVillano Scholarship.

Sandie Koytek, in preparing the weekly and Paschal candle donations pages for the Bee and to Fran Bucek and Helen Ballus for their service in our church offices;

Jimmy Campbell, Karen Russel, Ernie Flamik and Serge Kostun for their assistance in collating and stapling the Bee each week;

David Dervay, Shellee Chalachan and Sandi Koytek for their labors in tending to the Church financial records, preparing reports and writing checks;

Rick Dutko for managing our parish Website and Face Book channels for our live-streaming services, and to Tom Gazda for his technical support in improving our transmissions;

Maria Bocinski for managing our School Guild Gift Case with the many beautiful icons, prayer books and crosses;

Our cemetery staff, Randy May, Chris Puzakuics, Christopher DelVillano, Jake and Jarrod Kachmar with landscaping, Sandie McKillop for our roadside flowers, Bob Chalachan for equipment maintenance, Steve Marusich, Alan Gnall and Jimmy Campbell in straightening monuments and Fran Bucek for doing cemetery records and admin;

Barbara Knighton, president, and the members of our St. Michael's Ladies Guild for their generous service and outreach to the needs of our parish;

Our Altar Boys, the "Knights of the Altar" who have served faithfully during these COVID days,

Our special helpers who prepared both delicious Paska and Easter foods for all of home-bound faithful to enjoy for today's Paschal celebration;

Our special decorators at the Center, Helena Gee, Tricia Carman and Judy Rice;

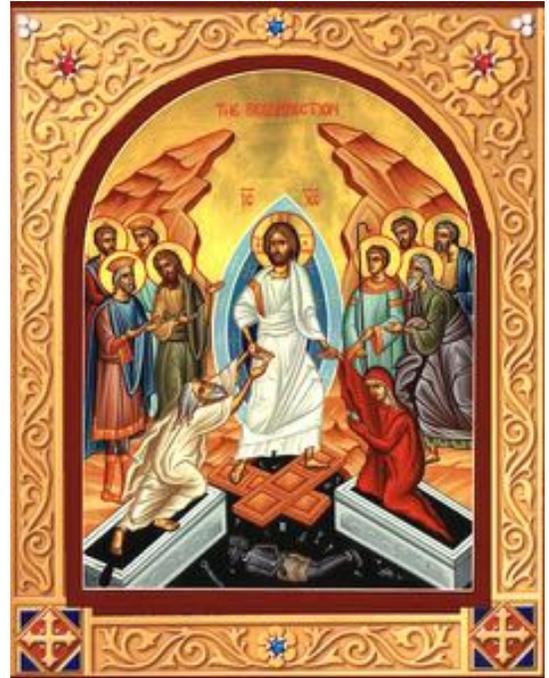
Jason Gdovin, president, and all the officers and members of the ACRY, as well as to Tasha Gdovin, Jr. ACRY Advisor and all the officers and members of our Junior ACRY;

Our local doctors, nurses, first-aid responders and all who assist in any way in reaching out to patients and families in the mist of COVID-19.

All of those in the service of our country and those who are in harms way in the Middle East, Afghanistan and Ukraine and the troubled regions of the world. May Our Lord strengthen and safeguard them all of them in these times of danger.

Christ's Descent into the Realm of Death

- Christ's cape/robe is flowing upward, this symbolizes his radical descent into Hades to save those who have died in the flesh.
- The golden bars by his feet are the gates of Hades, which he has broken and torn apart. There are keys floating in the abyss below, which symbolizes that he has entered and conquered both death and Hades.
- You may also note the skeletal figure who is chained up: that is Death and/or Satan. He has been bound and killed by Christ, which is why all throughout Pascha we sing "*Christ has trampled down death by death.*" The icon depicts Hebrews 2:14, "*that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil.*" The power of the devil and death have been destroyed through the life-giving death of our Savior.
- The two figures whom Christ has grasped and is pulling from tombs are Adam and Eve, symbolizing that his victory redeems all mankind, even back to the beginning. It also foreshadows the general resurrection of the body before the Final Judgment.
- To the left, we see three characters: David and Solomon, two of his ancestors according to his fleshly nature. We also see, closest to him, John the Baptizer, who was his forerunner in both life and death.
- The figures on the right vary from icon to icon, but usually represent Old Testament prophets and saints such as Moses, Abel as a shepherd, and the three youths who were thrown into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3).
- The blue shape around Christ is called the *Mandorla* (which is Italian for almond, which describes its shape). The *Mandorla* is the uncreated, eternal light of Christ. In the writings of the Eastern Orthodox mystics, God is often prayerfully experienced as light. This is not simply a pretty bright light. It is the same light which filled the apostles with wonder when they witnessed His Transfiguration. It is the light which Christ Himself described as the power of the Kingdom of God (*Mark 9:1 Matt 16:28 Luke 9:27*). It is the light that filled the once perpetual darkness of Hades when Christ descended and brought life into the realm of death. It is also the light that is seen when one purifies their heart and mind (*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*)
- The *Mandorla* becomes progressively darker as it moves toward its center, which is Christ. If God is represented by light, the *Mandorla* may seem confusing. However, those who seek God will find that the more they *know* Him, the less they *comprehend* Him. To *know* God, to *experience* Him, is to walk in the darkness of His light, to enter into the mystery of His presence.



For further reading on the intriguing ancient account from which this icon is taken, check out [The Harrowing of Hades. www.orthodoxroad.com/christs-descent-into-hell-icon-explanation/](http://www.orthodoxroad.com/christs-descent-into-hell-icon-explanation/)

The Proclamation of “Christ is Risen” Around the Entire World!

Albanian: Krishti Ungjall!

Arabic: Al Maseeh Qam!

Armenian: Christos harjav i merelotz!

Byelorussian: Khristos Uvoskros!

Chinese: Helisituosi fuhuole!

Coptic: Pikhirstof aftonf!

Czech: Kristus vstal zmrtvy'ch!

Danish: Kristus er opstanden!

Dutch: Christus is opgestaan!

English: Christ is Risen!

Estonian: Kristus on surnuist ülestõusnud!

Finnish: Kristus nousi Kuolleista!

French: Christ est Ressuscité!

Gaelic: Erid Krist!

Irish Gaelic: Tá Críosa ar éirigh!

Scots' Gaelic: Tha Crìosa air èiridh!

Georgian: Kriste aghsdga!

German: Christus ist auferstanden!

Greek: Christos Anesti!

Hebrew: Ha Mashiyach qam!

Hungarian: Krisztus feltámadt!

Italian: Cristo è risorto!

Japanese: Harisutosu Fukkatsu!

Latin: Christus resurrexit!

Norwegian: Kristus er oppstanden!

Polish: Khristus Zmartvikstau!

Portugese: Christo Ressuscitou!

Romanian: Hristos a Inviat!

Russian: Khristos voskres!

Serbian: Hristos Vaskrese!

Slavonic: Christos Voskrese!

Slovak: Kristus vstal zmr'tvy'ch!

Spanish: Cristo ha resucitado!

Sweedish: Kristus är upstånden!

Syriac: Meshiha qam!

Ukranian: Kristos Voskres!

Welsh: Atgyfododd Crist!



Kassia's Hymn, A Treasure of Repentance Leading to New Life!

by [V.K. McCarty](https://publicorthodoxy.org/2021/04/26/anticipating-kassias-cosmic-hymn/#more-8923) <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2021/04/26/anticipating-kassias-cosmic-hymn/#more-8923>

In preparing to participate in the services leading to Pascha, a memorable element of the Liturgy for many of the faithful is the Hymn of St. Kassia (ca.810-ca. 865 CE), “Lord, the Woman Fallen into Many Sins.” It is remembered as a heartwarming centerpiece of the Tuesday Evening service, and sung as the Doxostikon of the Aposticha, when the Wednesday “Bridegroom Matins,” is offered. The robust popularity of the “Kassiani,” as the hymn itself is often called, may stem from its appealing melody and the opportunity it provides for the chant to be elaborated on the tune with flourishes of extemporaneous melismatic ornaments which leave worshippers spellbound. Emotional urgency simmers through the story in light of the approaching Passion of Our Lord.

Because the text cries out from the inner landscape of the woman’s soul, there is a graceful fluid commingling in it of both the Gospel women who anoint Jesus at supper, the one in Luke read at the service (7:36-50) and the one in Matthew (26:6-13) as well; and, it is the same haunting amalgamation of women used by St. Romanos in his longer metrical homily, the kontakion, “On the Harlot.” So, this is a hymn rich with paradox and parallels, and a credit to the scriptural literacy of the Orthodox listener. Like Romanos, Kassia gives voice to the woman, here praising God for the majesty of Creation:



*Accept the springs of my tears,
you who with clouds spread out
the water of the sea:
bend down to me
to the lamentations of my heart.**

Think of the pleasure her spiritual father, St. Theodore the Studite, must have taken in receiving this troparion from his disciple, the Abbess Kassia, his spiritual daughter whose feast the Church celebrates on September 7. This theological jewel interpretively unfolds the Gospel lesson for us and reveals the redemptive mystery threaded through the working of God’s Salvation—the merciful and miraculous economy of Salvation—so that we can by repentance approach the Lord’s Divinity (*Theoteta*), and by that theosis, cosmically dwell in the life of heaven with him.

*You who made the heavens incline
by your ineffable humiliation.
Our sin separates us so harshly from God;
yet, by the gift of the Incarnation,
the Lord Jesus Christ is close enough for us to touch,
each and every sinner.
I will tenderly kiss your sacred feet,
I will wipe them again
with tresses of my hair.*

From ninth-century Constantinople, St. Kassia is teaching us that moments of true weeping repentance sacramentalize our personal experience of faith—so, the repentant woman is a powerful and useful *topos*. Her story illuminates our own creatureliness and our dependence on the boundless love that created us; for knitted into each and every one of us, along with the ability to choose actions that match or oppose the will of God, is the desire for unity with our merciful Creator, the desire to please God.

As a powerful *topos*, the Woman Fallen into Many Sins can help us all, brothers and sisters, plagued by the disappointment of our sins. For we, too, like the sinner on bended knee before Christ, see him as Lord. That the mysterious woman entering the dinner party, with her jar of fragrant Myrrh and Spikenard, recognizes Christ as Lord to the depths of her soul may be what spurred the inspiration of Kassia’s hymn in the first place. There, kneeling before Christ, one wonders, in fact, if that provocative sensation, of oil-fragrant hair anointing his feet—just think of that—clung in memory, so that when Jesus sought a powerful gesture to help teach his disciples the service and

forgiving components of apostolic ministry, he girded himself in a towel and he washed their feet as well, to show them how to be servant-ministers.

The Abbess hymnographer St. Kassia certainly describes evocatively the experience of sin—*oistros akalasias*—the sharply addictive temptation of dark pleasure. When desire at midnight overtakes the sinner; indeed, longing for sin can poison even our own striving for Salvation.

*Woe to me, she says,
for night holds for me
the ecstasy of intemperance
gloomy and moonless,
a desire for sin.*

What an awful realization: that our own tendency toward sin can blot out our awareness even of the love of God. Our priorities become fractured. How hopeless is that?—that our very desire for God can become refracted into something poisonous and addictive, so that sinful action begets more sinful action—and how can we stop the spiral in the moonless (*asélenos*) night, as Kassia says? By turning and acknowledging God’s love. This action of turning and facing the shame of our mistakes has about it the glimmer of a sacrament, doesn’t it, because even in the depth of the most sinful desire, the love of God is there, abiding, surrounding you. And as the woman in the hymn is bending down herself, she asks the Lord to bend down from Heaven to receive her lamentations.

Her contrition initiates a transformation: for in that very instance of recognizing the supper guest as Christ the Lord and asking forgiveness, the repentant woman is seen rising to function like a Holy Myrrhbearer—an astonishing and fitting parallel—one which can galvanize your prayer. Then, in another remarkably insightful parallel, Kassia identifies a connection between the woman kissing the feet of Jesus and the sound of the Lord—his footsteps—approaching Eve in the Garden.

*Those feet whose sound
Eve heard in Paradise
in the afternoon
and hid in fear.*

Kassia mystically stitches together the Gospel anointing-story with the Creation story in a liturgical tapestry which illuminates the transforming mercy of God in both of them—our God who judges and forgives. Indeed, the Priest chanting the Kassiani transports the listener to the ancient Garden of Eden—lush and pristine—yet heartbreaking as God seeks out Eve. So, we too, taste the sinful remorse of Eve, even there in paradise, and we know only too well Eve’s shame hearing the Lord approaching in the cool of the day. For Kassia allows us to see at once the woman bending to kiss the feet of Jesus from the Gospel reading, and Eve as well. Hearing Kassia’s Hymn, here on our Holy Week pilgrimage, we witness the woman’s first glimpse of forgiven hope on yet another Great and Holy Wednesday. For even here, on our knees in tears, we can rejoice in the ineffable gift that divine love taking on human nature is the route to Salvation, and relief from the savage spiral of human failing.

Would that we were, each of us, sinless like Our Pure and Holy Theotokas, fully submitting to God’s will. But alas, here in our mortal apparel, if we are honest, we realize that we have at times defied God, like that first woman and that first man, and our sin muddies the water of our relationship to God. And there is also that paradox in our society, isn’t there, that intimacy experienced between a man and a woman can end up crediting the man with prowess and condemning the woman as a harlot.

It is also possible to hear all this and to be slyly entertained, to relish the fantasy of some other sinner performing before your mind’s eye. But this hymn is offered to help all believers. Therefore, beware the tantalizing arousal, sparked by someone else’s sin—it may kindle your own sin-spiral away from the love of God; when indeed, the essence of this spiritual pilgrimage to Pascha is your own ability to be forgiven by the love of God. For the true lamentations of the heart are those of faithful men grieving their sins and also faithful women, all made in the likeness of God, and good at heart, but falling away into sin from time to time.

We each decry the multitude of our sins, and bending down, ask the mercy of the Lord in forgiving us when we repent. Every chanting participant, every hearer of the hymn, all of us are joined together in church pleading for the immeasurable depth of God’s mercy, knowing divine compassion can still be experienced in repentance. Kassia’s Hymn helps us lift the Gospel reading off the page and embody it in our hearts, where we encounter the Lord Jesus Christ, as ever, in a vision of paradox and transformation and awe.



Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!

With the Psalmist David, we proclaim with one heart and voice today: *“This is the day created by the Lord, let us rejoice and be glad in it!”*

We rejoice in the Lord today for after a year of much absence because of COVID concerns, many are privileged once more to walk with joy through the doors of St. Michaels and assemble together in our beloved parish church. As COVID concerns begin to diminish in the weeks ahead, we look forward to seeing those at a distance back with us too!

Our very life and our very presence is a consequence of His endless love for all of us. Together we raise our voices in triumph today in proclaiming once again the angelic message to the women at the empty tomb: “Christ is Risen!”

May Our Risen Lord bless you and your loved ones as you celebrate once more the Feast of His Resurrection with health and peace, joy and salvation for Many Blessed Years.

Christ is Risen!

Father Jim

Many Thanks to All Who Prepared Paska and Paschal foods for our Home-Bound!

