

The Weekly Messenger –April 28, 2019
St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church
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Epistle: Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!
KRISHTI U NGJALL! VERTET U NGJALL!

Holy Thursday: The Last Supper: Two events shape the liturgy of Great and Holy Thursday: the Last Supper of Christ with His disciples, and the betrayal of Judas. The meaning of both is in love. The Last Supper is the ultimate revelation of God's redeeming love for man, of love as the very essence of salvation. And the betrayal of Judas reveals that sin, death and self-destruction are also due to love, but to deviated and distorted love, love directed at that which does not deserve love. Here is the mystery of this unique day, and its liturgy, where light and darkness, joy and sorrow are so strangely mixed, challenges us with the choice on which depends the eternal destiny of each one of us. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come... having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end..." (John 13:1). To understand the meaning of the Last Supper we must see it as the very end of the great movement of Divine Love which began with the creation of the world and is now to be consummated in the death and resurrection of Christ. [Read More](#)

Great and Holy Friday the Orthodox Church commemorates the death of Christ on the Cross. This is the culmination of the observance of His Passion by which our Lord suffered and died for our sins. This commemoration begins on Thursday evening with the Matins of Holy Friday and concludes with a Vespers on Friday afternoon that observes the unnauling of Christ from the Cross and the placement of His body in the tomb.

Commemoration of Great and Holy Friday On this day 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 the Savior endured on the Cross. The day of Christ's death is the day of sin. The sin which polluted God's creation from the breaking dawn of time reached its frightful climax on the hill of Golgotha. There, sin and evil, destruction and death came into their own. Ungodly men had Him nailed to the Cross, in order to destroy Him. However, His death condemned irrevocably the fallen world by revealing its true and abnormal nature.

April giving: Dyed Red Eggs and Your Pascha Donation

Great and Holy Saturday our focus is on the Tomb of Christ. This is no ordinary grave. It is not a place of corruption, decay and defeat. It is life-giving, a source of power, victory and liberation. Great Saturday is the day between Jesus' death and His resurrection. It is the day of watchful expectation, in which mourning is being transformed into joy. The day embodies in the fullest possible sense the meaning of xarmolipi - joyful-sadness, which has dominated the celebrations of Great Week. The hymnographer of the Church has penetrated the profound mystery, and helps us to understand it through the following poetic dialogue that he has devised between Jesus and His Mother:

On the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha, Orthodox Christians celebrate the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This feast of feasts is the most significant day in the life of the Church. It is a celebration of the defeat of death, as neither death itself nor the power of the grave could hold our Savior captive. In this victory that came through the Cross, Christ broke the bondage of sin, and through faith offers us restoration, transformation, and eternal life.

Commemorations for the Departed: The victims of the bombings in Sri Lanka, Jorgjia Kashari, Father Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen and women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country. *If you have a name to add to the Commemorations for the departed or the living please email info@stjohnsphila.org*

Commemorations for the Living: Archbishop Nikon, Lee Gedremenc (Bill Bortner's father), Marion Merkle, Tala Ayyad, Diane Mallios, Rose Adams, Evangeline Prifti, Lisa Kelley, Donna Hlavcek, Father Dimitrie Vincent, Dolly Seiler, Elizabeth Jones, Ann Gjoka, Virginia Daka, Haretina (Papa) Milo, Peter Melnik, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and all of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces

Charity & Benevolence Event: Another clothing and food distribution to the homeless is planned for Sunday, May 19th following the Divine Liturgy. We gladly welcome your donations of gently used clothing and shoes. Please bring these items to church over the next few weeks.

Coffee Hour Sponsors:

April 28th PASCHA no coffee hour,
May 12th Ana & Irakli Nadareishrili,
May 26th No Sponsor,

May 5th Sophia & Andrew Kozlov
May 19th Elena & Zach
June 2nd Sunday School

Upcoming Events

Monday, April 29th Charity & Benevolence Committee Meeting 7:00 pm
May 7th Parish Council Meeting 7:00 pm
May 18th Buddy Walk