

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

4815 5th Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 - Rectory Phone: 412-687-1220

Website: holyspiritbycath.com - Email: holyspiritinformation@gmail.com

Administrator: Reverend Michael D. Kunitz, M. Div.

Email: FrMichaelKunitz@gmail.com

Cantor: Julia Revilak & Family

Sub-Deacon: Raphael Ruggiero

April 13, 2025

Palm & Flowery Sunday

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Palm & Flowery Sunday, Apr 13: 10:25am Rosary, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy with Blessing of the Palm
IMO Gerald Bacasa by Uncle Joe & Aunt Dee

Holy Monday, Apr 14: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Bridegroom Matins

Holy Wednesday, Apr 16: 8:00 am Bridegroom Matins, 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Presanctified w/Holy Anointing
IHO Cathy Warhola on her birthday

Holy Thursday, Apr 17: 8:00 am Holy Thursday Matins, 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Vigil Divine Liturgy
LAST OPPORTUNITY FOR CONFESSIONS BEFORE EASTER

Great & Holy Friday, Apr 18: 8:00 am Strasti Matins
6:00 pm Burial Vespers followed by Vigil Before the Tomb until, 12:00 am

Great & Holy Saturday, Apr 19: 12am Midnight Jerusalem Matins
6pm Vigil Divine Liturgy, 7:00 pm Paschal Matins
Followed by Blessing of the Pascha Baskets (In Church Hall)

Easter Sunday, Apr 20: **Great & Holy Pascha** 10:25am Rosary, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy
For the Health & Welfare of Holy Spirit Parishioners
Followed by Blessing of the Pascha Baskets (In Church Hall)

Divine Liturgies are open for intentions. If you would like to make an intention for a Liturgy, please call the office or fill out request form in the back of the church and give it to Fr. Michael.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS: If you are interested in learning to lead Matins as a Reader's Service on Sunday before Liturgy, please see Father Michael. Matins is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month unless otherwise noted.

THANK YOU! To everyone who has helped with cleaning and preparing the church for Holy Week!

PALM CROSS FUNDRAISER: The Revilak Family has **palm crosses at \$10 each.** These beautiful handmade crosses have been a special fundraiser for our parish. We hope you will support this project.

SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION WITH GOD - GREAT FAST CONFESSIONS: In her wisdom, the Church requires all faithful to make a sacramental confession during the Great Fast, as we commemorate the redemptive acts of Christ. Let us all approach the loving Lord Jesus during this penitential great fast season, seeking His merciful forgiveness through sacramental confession. In the Holy Mystery of Penance, we unburden ourselves of sin, and we reconcile ourselves with God as we receive His true peace. During the Great Forty-Days, remember to make your confession!

GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY VIGIL APRIL 18: Please consider signing up for a time between 7pm & Midnight (between Burial Vespers and Jerusalem Matins) A sign up sheet will be posted closer to Holy Week.

COFFEE SOCIAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: In addition to attending services together, it is important that we spend time in conversation with one another. To make it truly a time of sharing – we ask everyone to sign up to host a Sunday. We look forward to seeing you!

MAY 31ST FLEA MARKET: We are currently accepting donations for our next flea market. It's a great time to Spring Clean, but please no books or clothing. We will need volunteers to help set up the tables and price items – more details to follow. We hope you can support this important fundraiser. Please see Mary Dzurichko with any questions.

20th ANNUAL WOMAN'S DAY OF REFLECTION: Saturday, May 17, 2025 at Kearns Spirituality Center at LaRoche University. The topic is Revisiting the Wedding Feast of Cana. Cost is \$40 and registration is due by May 3, 2025. Full details can be found at archpitt.org

APRIL BIRTHDAYS:

May God grant you many happy and blessed years!

4/2 Scarlett Revilak

4/3 Milan Revilak

4/15 Catherine Warhola

4/30 Lynne Walicki

ICONS AVAILABLE: There are several blessed icons in the church hall, there is no charge to take these home, though a free will offering for the benefit of the parish is welcome.

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY: On Blossom Sunday, we emulate those crowds who proclaimed the Kingship of Jesus, for we also hold high the branches of spring as our symbols of triumph. Like the Philippians, we rejoice because Jesus is truly our King! Hosanna! We now accompany Him as He goes to secure our eternal salvation.

Epistle: Philippians 4: 4-9

Brethren, Rejoice in the Lord always! I say it again, Rejoice! Everyone should see how unselfish you are. The Lord is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and petitions full of gratitude. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Finally, my brethren, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous, or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you.

--Today on this solemn feast, we commemorate the public acknowledgment of Jesus' royal prerogatives as an anointed King from all eternity, and we proclaim His Kingship as He jubilantly enters Jerusalem. The words of the Holy Apostle Paul written to the Christian community at Philippi seem most appropriate as the Lord approaches us today in triumph: "*Rejoice in the Lord always! I say it again, Rejoice! the peace of God, which is beyond human understanding, will guard your hearts and minds.*" The "peace" about which Paul is speaking can only come to those who truly accept the kingship of Jesus. Through these words to the Philippians, Paul now echoes the keynotes of Passion Week: "*Rejoice in the Lord always! The Lord is near!*" It is true that the Lord is near. He is in our midst! We must welcome Him into the "Jerusalem" of our hearts as our personal King to Whom we express love and loyalty!

GOSPEL: John 12: 1-18

Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him. Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Then Judas the Iscariot, one [of] his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?" He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the

money bag and used to steal the contributions. So, Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." [The] large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too, because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him. On the next day, when the great crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, [even] the king of Israel." Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written: "Fear no more, O daughter Zion; see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt." His disciples did not understand this at first, but when Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that these things were written about him and that they had done this for him. So, the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from death continued to testify. This was [also] why the crowd went to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign.

--The Holy Evangelist John gives us the details of how Jesus came to Bethany, and there He raised from the dead His friend Lazarus who had been in the tomb for four days. This awesome miracle took place on Saturday, and the news of it was spreading everywhere. That evening, which was six days before the Feast of Passover, Jesus was at supper with Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary. Mary took some very expensive perfume made from aromatic spices and anointed Jesus' feet and then wiped them dry with her hair. Jesus remarked that this ointment should be kept for His burial. The next day on Sunday morning, as Jesus prepared to enter Jerusalem, enormous crowds of Jewish people came out to meet Him, waving branches, spreading flowers and triumphantly proclaiming His Kingship. While escorting Him into the Holy City, they acclaimed Him to be the "King of Israel." The Lord indeed is near! He has come among us for the passion! Today, on Blossom Sunday, as we carry these symbols of His royalty and the emblems of His ultimate victory, we must ready ourselves to go along willingly with Him – to follow our King to His passion!

WE ARE OBSERVING A SOLEMN FEASTDAY TODAY: We are celebrating jubilantly The Feast of the Royal Entry into Jerusalem of our Lord Jesus Christ. This feast day is called Blossom Sunday (*Kv'itna Ned'ilja*) by the Ruthenian people, for the first indications of the new life of spring were usually visible in the freshly budding blossoms on the trees and in the newly blossoming buds of greens and flowers. We welcome Jesus today as our personal King with the symbolic branches used when He entered Jerusalem: the palm, the emblem of victory; the willow, indicative of new life; and the olive branch, signifying peace. The Hebrew children also threw flowers in His path, and these remind us of the magnificent beauty of eternal life. The Church emphasizes for us today the two themes of the eternal kingship of Jesus and also the fact that His "*hour has come*" (to accomplish our salvation). The Lord is near, and He comes to fulfill the will of His Father Who had sent Him to earth in order to secure redemption for the entire human race. We must go through Passion Week with Jesus!

THE FIRST THREE DAYS OF PASSION WEEK: On Great Monday, Great Tuesday, and Great Wednesday, we follow the Lord Jesus each day in the Temple at Jerusalem as He preaches to the people, instructing them about His messianic mission and the establishment of His true Kingdom. At the morning prayer service of the Church for these three days, that is at the Bridegroom Matins, Jesus is depicted as the "Bridegroom" Who now comes to claim His bride, which is the Church – the People of God (*all of us*). On each of these days, the Church's evening liturgical service is the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. This sacred Eucharistic rite prepares us to participate with Jesus in His forthcoming passion, crucifixion, death and burial. On Great Wednesday evening, a special anointing "for the healing of soul and body" is given to all of the faithful present. The elderly and those suffering from any physical or emotional infirmity should avail themselves of this unique sacramental blessing of the Church that is given yearly only on the evening of Great Wednesday.

GREAT THURSDAY: THE LORD'S MYSTICAL SUPPER: With the Betrayal Matins, the morning service of prayer of the Church for Great Thursday, Judas' treacherous act is portrayed as the traitor conspires to sell out Jesus and to hand Him over to His enemies. The Vigil Divine Liturgy of the Lord's Mystical Supper constitutes the Church's evening liturgical service, and at this festive vespers Divine Liturgy, we commemorate the institution of the Mysteries of the Eucharist and the Priesthood. At this Passover Meal, Jesus thus provided forever for the spiritual nourishment and sustenance of all of us, His faithful people – the Church.

THE MOST SOLEMN DAY OF THE YEAR: GREAT FRIDAY: We unite ourselves on Great Friday with our Divine Savior as Jesus accomplishes those acts which signify the Mysteries of our Redemption. At its morning service of prayer, the Passion Matins, the Church recounts the horrific sufferings of Jesus through the reading of the twelve gospels of the passion. With the Royal Hours, the Church's daytime prayer service, we reflect upon the actual physical death of Jesus upon the holy wood of the salvific cross. The Entombment Vespers comprise the evening liturgical prayer of the Church, and we thus participate in the burial of our Lord after His execution on Golgotha as His corpse is wrapped in a shroud (*plascanica*) and then placed in a new tomb.

GREAT SATURDAY – THE VIGIL AT THE HOLY SEPULCHER: The Church mourns the death of Jesus Christ on Great Saturday and stands watch throughout this somber day in keeping a vigil at His holy tomb. The Sepulchral Matins are served as the Church's morning prayer, during which Jesus' funeral is conducted with poetic dirges that are chanted over His lifeless body. At the evening liturgical service of the Church, which is the Paschal Vigil Divine Liturgy, salvation history is recounted, culminating with Jesus as the true Lamb of God Who affects the New Passover from Death unto eternal life. This vesperal Divine Liturgy illustrates vividly how, through baptism, we are incorporated with Christ, our Divine Savior, into these sacred paschal mysteries.

THE SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION: THE GREAT DAY: On The Feast of the Radiant Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Byzantine Catholic Church celebrates the actual physical resurrection of Christ at its morning service of Resurrection Matins. Jesus' victory over death is extolled with eloquently expressive hymns of magnificent joy. On Resurrection Sunday, the paschal foods brought to the Church in the Easter Baskets first receive the Church's solemn resurrectional blessing. Then they are eaten at the traditional meal served by the Ruthenian people on Resurrection Day. This repast is a happy and jubilant observance known as the Sanctified Meal (Svjacenoje). It has a triumphant and victorious character to it as the New Passover and the Holy Resurrection Feast are radiantly celebrated. At the Resurrectional Divine Liturgy, which is offered on the Great day, the Church exultantly reechoes the message of hope that is being sent into the entire world. This is the Gospel message – the Good News – which proclaims that Jesus has accomplished the perfect Passover by conquering the powers of evil. It affirms that since He has risen from the dead, He now has the great power to bestow eternal life!

ON-LINE GIVING IS HERE! If you wish to make a monetary donation to our parish – you can do so on our website or by using this QR code. Remember every dollar helps support the mission of our parish community. Thank you.



PRAYER FOR OUR FOUR SAINTLY BISHOPS: Please pray for the causes of our four Saintly Bishops and ask them to intercede for your specific intentions: O Almighty God, our Lord, we bless You, we praise You, and we thank you for all the graces which You, in Your infinite mercy have bestowed upon us. We are especially grateful for giving us four saintly and heroic Bishops: **Bishop Theodore G. Romzha, Bishop Paul P. Gojdich OBSM, Bishop Basil Hopko, and Bishop Alexander Chira**, who, by their courage, charity, and intrepid faith, inspired our Ruthenian people in the darkest moments of their history. By their great sufferings, humiliating imprisonment, and violent death they gave living witness to their Catholic faith and glorified Your exalted name. Therefore, O Gracious Lord, glorify them in return by Your divine power and inscribe their names in the book of Your Saints. For you are holy, our God, and we render glory to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever, Amen. With Ecclesiastical Approbation Acknowledgment of answered prayers: Postulator's office, 54 Riverview Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15214, U.S.A.

PRAYER FOR SEMINARIANS: **Saints Cyril and Methodius**, Venerable Apostles of the Slavs and Patrons of our Byzantine Catholic Seminary, we place our Seminarians in your loving care. Help them to grow in humility, meekness and prudence. Enkindle in them a burning zeal for souls. May their hearts be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and may they learn to know and love the church so that they may always and everywhere think, speak and act with Her, the Glorious Spouse of Christ. May they become exemplars of generosity and detachment from the things of this world. But above all, O Venerable Patrons, help them to truly know, love and serve the Eternal High Priest, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose priests they aspire to be. Amen. St. Michael the Archangel, Defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen