

Adult Bible Study - Monday, May 20th @ 7:00 pm. Come join us and learn about the richness of our faith through scripture. Bring your bibles, we will be using the Orthodox Study Bible. For more information call the office at: (773) 334-4515 and speak to Father John.

LYRA Ensemble presents the Music of Russia, May 18 at 7 pm in Hyde Park - Spend an evening with these six professional Russian singers from St. Petersburg as they share the musical heritage of the Russian Orthodox Church and the traditions of Russian folk music. Reception to follow. For ticket and event information, visit AugustanaHydePark.org. Cosponsored by St. Makarios The Great Orthodox Mission.

Spiritual Book Club – We will be meeting today.

For our church festival this July, St. Andrew's PARISHIONERS BOUTIQUE needs your help. Look around your house and in your closets. If you find anything that you can donate, please bring them to the church office. Check the pamphlet inside the Sunday Bulletin for more information or call Semi Karnezos at (773) 654-3450.

Thursday, May 16th: Annual IOCC Pan Orthodox Grand Banquet -

Did you know that IOCC delivered more than 600 million dollars of emergency relief around the world since 1992! IOCC spends 92% of its resources on humanitarian relief, while only 8% is spent on administrative costs and fundraising support. Please join us for this annual event. This year's Banquet will be held on Thursday evening, May 16, 2019 at: Cafe le Cave, 2777 Mannheim Rd., Des Plaines. Cocktails are at 6:00 pm, and Dinner is at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$125. Please See Kathy Siavelis (gsiavelis@sbcglobal.net) to make your reservations and for additional information.



Personal Items Drive Sunday May 5 - Sunday June 2 - Philoptochos along with the Parish and Sunday School will be collecting items for 'The Dreamcatchers' who fight to end Human Trafficking.

Here's how you can help:

Make a \$6 donation and we'll purchase the items, OR bring in ONLY the following TRAVEL SIZE ITEMS: deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush, lotion, hand sanitizer & body wash.

Contact Stephane at: sacollop@gmail.com or Vonnie at 708-280-6537.

Saturday, May 18th - 9am Breakfast, 10am Metropolis Presidents' meeting. St. Iakovos Retreat Center

The next Metropolis Presidents' meeting will be held at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, Wisconsin. While the meeting is called a Presidents' Meeting, it is not just for presidents alone. All members are welcome to attend and participate.

Tuesday, June 18 - Dinner Night Out. Valley Lo Sports Club, Glenview. 6pm Fellowship, 7pm Dinner

What a great way to wind down from a busy winter and spring... dinner out with our Philoptochos members, welcoming friends, spouses, and guests. Pricing is \$40 per person, and includes appetizers, choice of entree (chicken piccata or roast pork loin), salad, dessert. Cash bar. Join us on the patio, and then dinner indoors. To reserve your seat, please contact Vickie or Terri.

Saturday, November 16, 2019. Children's Medical Fund Luncheon - Chicago Marriott Downtown Reception 11am, Luncheon 12, noon

Yes, we are looking at November... However, this specific fundraiser/luncheon is integral in Philoptochos' mission of helping those most in need. This fund has sought to provide medical assistance to critically ill Greek, Greek American and Orthodox children, whose families are unable to afford appropriate and necessary medical treatment. The Fund also provides grants for innovative research programs to pediatric hospitals throughout the United States and to organizations with special programs that care for children with critical and life threatening illnesses. It's a big deal, and ask our membership to be supportive of this event. Reservations are now being taken. In order to reserve our table (or tables), we need your commitment. Please make your \$125 check payable to SAWPS. The sooner we have your payment, the sooner we can reserve our table(s). There will be over 800 in attendance. Come be part of the excitement, knowing that you are supporting children in need.

Welcome to Saint Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church
"Proclaiming Orthodoxy Since 1926"

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Fr. John N. Kalomas – Proistamenos
Fr. Athanasios Minetos - Associate Priest
Fr. John Kutulas – In Loving Memory

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019 (Sunday of the Myrrh Bearing Women)

STEWARDSHIP QUOTE – Now, We Know The Triumph Of Christ. For His Triumph Became The First Steward Of Those Who Have Fallen Asleep. The Greatest Stewardship Gift That Was Given. Let Us Give What We Can In Return.

MEMORIAL

Despina Peroustianis - 5 years

May Her Memory Be Eternal!!!

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!!

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• **FOR NON-ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS:** *We welcome those Christians not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions of Christianity that we cannot extend to you a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness in faith, life, and worship. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist and for which we must all pray. We do however invite you to receive the blessed bread that is given out to all at the end of service. Thank you for coming and worshiping with us.*
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Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women

In today's Gospel, we revisit the tomb as Joseph provides for Christ's burial and the myrrhbearing women come to anoint Christ's body with spices and oils, only to discover that the tomb is empty. They run from the garden, the Bible tells us, "amazed and bewildered." Now, we've walked through the repentance and preparation of fifty days of Lent. We prayed and worshipped through the intensity of Holy Week that erupted into the Joy and triumph of Pascha, proclaiming that Christ through His death has trampled down death, and we've experienced the celebration and lightness of Bright Week. Why now, then, does the Church return to the tomb? Let's take a closer look.

We find these women watching as Joseph takes Christ's body down from the cross. They have followed Jesus through his passion, witnessing that he was tried and crucified. They have watched as Joseph of Arimathea stepped up and gave Jesus a proper burial in his own tomb. They have seen the stone sealing the tomb. These women loved Jesus, and now they grieve for the loss of their beloved leader. All hope is lost. He is gone.

Yet even in the face of hopelessness, these women act. They buy ointments that will help his body dry out as it decays, and sweet spices so that even in death, his body is honored. Their actions show their steadfast love for Christ, that even after hope is shattered, they go the extra mile to honor Jesus. Such is their love for this dead man.

In their actions, we see that the myrrhbearers came to anoint Christ not out of a desire for any recognition or reward from Jesus, nothing that they could get out of it. He is dead. The women probably have no recollection that Christ said he would rise again, so they probably have no hope of triumph in Jesus' death. They come not to receive, and probably not consciously to give either, but they are motivated by their love for Him, that they want His body to be blessed with sweet smelling fragrance.

Yet these women are honored with being the first witnesses to Christ's resurrection. They were the first to know the joy that Christ had defeated death, that hope was fulfilled, that despair and grief were not all that was left to them. And, they were the first commissioned with going and telling others that Christ had risen from the dead. These women were not seeking the excitement of some great commission, but they received this as a result of their desire to love and serve Christ even after death.

Now, we know the triumph of Christ. We know the end of the story. We know this even as we walk with these women to the tomb, as they despair, hopeless. Yet still in our lives, we also may deal with despair. Why am I stuck in this job? Why can't I pay my bills? Why can't I be patient with my

children? Why do I feel so alone? When we are abandoned, when we try to follow God's will but can't see the way, when we lose someone or something we don't think we can live without, when we suffer, perhaps that is when we experience Christ as dead.

In the film trilogy and popular book, *The Lord of the Rings*, our two reluctant heroes, Frodo and Sam, talk about how different it is to not merely be the readers of a tale, but in the middle of it, not knowing how it will really end up. If you don't mind, I'd like to recite you this passage. It begins with Sam talking to Frodo:

'I used to think that the old tales and songs were things the wonderful folk of the stories went out and looked for, because they wanted them, because they were exciting and life was a bit dull, a kind of a sport, as you might say. But that's not the way of it with the tales that really mattered. Folk seem to have been just landed in them, usually – their paths were laid that way. But I expect they had lots of chances, like us, of turning back, only they didn't. And if they had, we shouldn't know, because they'd have been forgotten. We hear about those as just went on – and not all to a good end, mind you; at least not to what folk inside a story call a good end... I wonder what sort of a tale we've fallen into?' 'I wonder,' said Frodo. 'But I don't know. And that's the way of a real tale. Take any one that you're fond of. You may know, or guess, what kind of a tale it is, happy-ending or sad-ending, but the people in it don't know. And you don't want them to... You and I, Sam, are still stuck in the worst places of the story, and it is all too likely that some will say at this point: "Shut the book now, dad; we don't want to read anymore.'" -Book IV, Ch. 8

I think there is a reason why we return to the tomb after Pascha. The Church has specifically set for us, through the lectionary, our return to the experience of Joseph and the Myrrh bearers after they had lost their hope. The Church brings us back to the worst place of their story. For while we know now of Christ's resurrection, and while we have been given the commission as witnesses to go and tell about the risen Christ, still we, like Frodo and Sam are also in the middle of our tale, not knowing how it will end.

It is interesting that the first New Testament reading for today tells of the selection of the first deacons of the Jerusalem Church. Perhaps the model for these deacons and the model for all service is the myrrhbearers. As we heard this morning, the deacons were established to serve the widows who were being neglected. So the Church reminds us that in the same way that Joseph took Christ's body down from the cross, as the myrrh bearers came to honor Christ's body and bore witness to Christ's resurrection, as the deacons began

their service by distributing food to the needy, so all of us are commissioned to love the body of Christ, the Church.

We know that Christ has trampled down death by death, yet still we live doing battle against this present darkness (Eph. 6:12). We struggle for justice and peace, we fight against ourselves to love our neighbors. But let's be honest. Sometimes we believe the triumph of Christ ultimately, but often we struggle to find the triumph of Christ now in this day. This lesson of the Myrrh bearers reminds us that even when we question how our stories will end, whether Christ truly will triumph in us, still we can get up early and bring spices to the Christ that we love, even when all seems lost. Sometimes in our work within the Church, in our attempts to love within our families, within society, it might often feel like we're working with a dead corpse. But we may be surprised to find what we thought was dead is indeed alive. For the love that brought the myrrhbearers is not unlike God's love: It cannot be destroyed by death. Christ died but has risen, trampling down our despair, trampling down injustice,

trampling down persecution, trampling down sickness, trampling down war, trampling down evil, trampling down death. Christ is victorious. This is the hope that we have, our hope to go on. Not false hope, but hope based on the reality of the resurrection, the message of the angel to the women at the tomb, passed down through the ages, through time and space, delivered to us here today.

You and I may still be stuck in the worst parts of our tales, but today we're reminded through the Myrrhbearers of the victory that is truly here, and that is coming when our own tale is fulfilled.

Christ is Risen.

Taken from St. Mary Orthodox Church, Cambridge, MA and posted on PARVMIR.COM

EPISTLE READING

Acts 6:1-7

In those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochoros, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaos, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

GOSPEL READING

Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the

kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.