

# SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 19 Issue 5

May 2019

## April Council Highlights

- ✘ March's Operating Income was \$14,889.83 Operating Expenses were \$14,585.24 resulting in a \$304.59 for month of March.
- ✘ Parking lot repair is slated for early June.
- ✘ City will be rerouting two water lines onto Church property from the main street.
- ✘ Archbishop BENJAMIN will join us the weekend of June 8-9.



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## Finding Courage

**Risk and courage are outstanding elements in the lives of the Myrrhbearing Women and also Joseph of Arimathea, who asked for and buried the body of Jesus Christ.**

Picture the women on the way to the tomb of Christ that very early, still -dark morning. It wasn't the safest time of day for a group of unaccompanied females to be on the road under any circumstances. But on this particular morning the Jewish authorities were hyper-vigilant and suspicious, and a detail of guards had been posted at the tomb. There were plenty of reasons for the women simply to be too afraid to go and anoint the Lord's body.

Yet the Gospels tell us that they expressed only one concern: "Who will roll away the stone?" They were intent on doing what was proper for a beloved person who had died, and so they found their courage. Nor did they run away from the angel at the tomb, of whom they were indeed afraid, as Mark 16:8 tells



us. They stayed, heard the angel's command, and rushed to carry it out by giving the apostles the good news of the resurrection (Luke 24:9).

Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of the Lord, but a secret one. The Gospels give us a few facts about him. He was a rich man, prominent in the community, and a member of the Sanhedrin, the council of Jewish leaders. It was due to his public visibility and his position as a council member that he kept his discipleship secret.

So Joseph was probably not a person of great courage. Like many people with much to lose, he was not going to risk his place and possessions readily. Yet while the disciples fled and hid, Joseph stepped forward and declared himself a loving friend of the Lord at the moment when it was most dangerous to do so.

Pontius Pilate had just condemned Jesus Christ to death. There had been no public outcry

of protest; His followers were demoralized, fearful, and silent. Even Pilate—perhaps especially Pilate, with his self-protective and hesitant nature—must have been impressed by the bravery of this man coming forward, alone, to ask for the body of the executed preacher.

The Gospels tell us that Joseph was a good and just man, and had not consented to the Sanhedrin's decision to condemn Jesus. This was an act of fortitude. But asking for the body was even more of a risk, because it brought him to the notice of the Romans and of his fellow Jewish leaders, most of whom had wanted Jesus to die. Only by "taking courage," as Luke writes, could Joseph make such a request.

The danger faced by the Myrrhbearing Women as they walked to the tomb was real. So was the fear of losing position and security faced by Joseph. But they all found their courage, because they were "waiting for the Kingdom of God" (Mark 15:45). They saw that Kingdom in Jesus Christ, and fear would never be able to hold them back again.

# Message From Our Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*Christ is risen!*

Through days and weeks of the Great Fast we prepared for the celebration of Holy Week. In Holy Week we participated in the annual commemoration of the Lord's life-giving passion and death. The various services of Holy Week, the proclamation of the Scriptures and the singing of the ancient hymnography of the Church, allowed us to bear witness to the great mystery of the Son of God entering into the fullness of human life, including physical death. On the Feast of Feasts, Holy Pascha, we joyously proclaimed His victory over sin and death in His triumphant Resurrection from the dead. The Church now continues to celebrate this bright victory throughout the forty days of the Paschal Season. Let us pray that in our parish and in our homes we will sustain the joyous spirit of Pascha and that the proclamation of Christ's victory- and ours- will continue to be proclaimed in our daily lives, each and every day of the year.

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

With love in the Risen Lord,

*+Bishop Daniel*



# Images of Our Journey to Pascha

*Lazarus Saturday*



*Holy Thursday*



*Holy Friday*



*Palm Sunday*

*Bridegroom Matins*



# Images of Our Journey to Pascha

## Holy Saturday



## Pascha



# The Myrrhbearing Women: ‘Witnesses of these things’

Fr. Steven Kostoff

During the week following last Sunday’s commemoration of the Myrrhbearing Women, the Vespers and Matins hymns focused on these extraordinary women and their role as apostolic witnesses, implying their role as “apostles to the apostles.” Their eyewitness testimony of both the empty tomb and the Risen Lord continues to amaze me, and I can only imagine the excitement and intense response with which this testimony must have been greeted when they shared their experience with the other members of the earliest Christian communities. Their timeless witness is with us until “the end of the world.” As the New Testament scholar, Richard Baukham writes, “These women, I think we can say, acted as apostolic eyewitness guarantors of the traditions about Jesus, especially his resurrection but no doubt also in other respects. As we have seen, that their witness acquires textual form in the Gospels implies that it can never have been regarded as superseded or unimportant. For as long as these women were alive their witness, ‘We have seen the Lord,’ carried the authority of those the Lord himself commissioned to witness to his resurrection.... They were well-known figures and there were a large number of them. They surely continued to be active traditioners whose recognized eyewitness authority could act as a touchstone to guarantee the traditions as others relayed them and to protect the traditions from inauthentic developments” [*Gospel Women*, p. 295].



If “fear and trembling seized them” when they departed from the empty tomb [Mark 16:8], perhaps in our more focused moments we, too, can experience that same “fear and trembling” when we again read or listen to Saint Mark’s account in the Gospel. There is something unforgettable and awe-inspiring about that ever-memorable morning when the sun was just rising and the stone to the tomb had been rolled away, followed then by the appearance of the “young man” dressed in “white robes” announcing “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” [Mark 16:8]. The angel understood their amazement, because the women sensed the presence of God filling that empty tomb with an other-worldly reality. Their own disorientation at this unexpected turn of events when they left the tomb is probably behind their initial silence. (This does not mean that the women failed to fulfill the command of the angel to tell the disciples that they would see Jesus in Galilee. It probably means that they did not share this news with others until the time the risen Christ appeared to His disciples confirming the proclamation of the angel that He had indeed risen). We, in turn, have to always guard against over-familiarity dulling our response to the Good News of Christ’s Resurrection from the dead. This is not a message to be nonchalant about! The Resurrection has changed the world and certainly change the lives of Christian believers. And we, too, are “witnesses of these things” [Luke 24:48].

The role of the Myrrhbearing Women has always been treated with great respect and recognition within the Church. In one of our most beloved Paschal hymns, “Let God Arise,” two of the stanzas are dedicated to the Myrrhbearers and their witness. These hymns build upon the scriptural accounts of their visit to and discovery of the empty tomb, poetically developing those terse scriptural verses in a more embellished manner that weaves together a host of scriptural messianic images together with the Gospel accounts:

*Come from that scene, O women, bearers of glad tidings,  
And say to Zion: Receive from us the glad tidings of joy of Christ’s resurrection.  
Exult and be glad, and rejoice, O Jerusalem, seeing Christ the King,  
Who comes forth from the tomb like a bridegroom in procession.*

*The Myrrhbearing Women, at the break of dawn,  
Drew near to the tomb of the Life-giver.  
There they found an angel sitting upon the stone.  
He greeted them with these words:  
“Why do you seek the living among the dead?  
Why do you mourn the incorrupt amid corruption?  
Go, proclaim the glad tidings to His disciples.”*

As an aside of sorts, when listening to Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Russian Easter Overture,” I always feel that he musically captures the excitement and energy of the Myrrhbearers discovering the empty tomb.

The Myrrhbearing Women did not mysteriously disappear following the Resurrection of Christ. There were many of them, and we have the names or a reference to at least the following: Mary Magdalene, Mary

*(Continued on page 6)*

# The Myrrhbearing Women: “Witnesses of these things”

(Continued from page 5)

the mother of Joseph the Little and Jose, Salome, Mary of Clopas, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, Susanna, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. And, of course, the “mother of Jesus,” as she is referred to by the Evangelist John [19:25], was at the foot of the Cross. They must have shared their experience innumerable times, and their credibility is what lies behind their inclusion in the Gospels. They must have therefore been very prominent figures in the apostolic era of the Church. I would again stress their presence in the liturgical services of Pascha. Their presence permeates these services as the empty tomb is always an object of pious and reverential celebration:

*Before the dawn, Mary and the women came*

*And found the stone rolled away from the tomb.*

*They heard the angelic voice:*

*“Why do you seek among the dead as a man the One Who is everlasting light?*

*Behold the clothes in the grave.*

*Go and proclaim to the world: “The Lord is risen. He has slain death,*

*As He is the Son of God, saving the race of men” (Hypakoe).*

To again include a fine summary by the New Testament scholars, Richard Baukham writes, “As prominent members of the early communities, probably traveling around the communities, they were doubtless active in telling the stories themselves. They may not usually like the male apostles, have done so in public contexts, because of the social restrictions on women in public space. But this is no reason to deny them the role of authoritative apostolic witnesses and shapers of Gospel traditions, since there need not have been such restrictions in Christian meetings and since they could

witness even to outsiders in women-only contexts such as the women’s quarters of houses” [*Gospel Women*, p. 302-303].

Jesus turned things upside down by proclaiming joy to the world through the Cross. Overcoming social prejudices, He raised to great prominence these humble women who would otherwise be unknown to the world. He granted them an integral role in proclaiming the Good News to the world that the sting of death has been overcome through His rising from the dead. As long as the Gospel is proclaimed, we will venerate and celebrate the memory of the Myrrhbearing Women and rejoice with them.

Reprinted from the Orthodox Church in America web site, <https://oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/the-myrrhbearing-women-witnesses-of-these-things1> ✕

## Around SS Peter & Paul

### MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- May 1 Anna Hudson
- 3 Deacon John & Mastushka Julianna  
Scott MacPherson
- 8 Marina Harrelson
- 16 David Bieber
- 17 Vi Wasilenko
- 18 Darya Dolenko
- 19 Timofei Kadyrov  
Hailee Behnen  
Tamerlan Kadyrov
- 23 Anastasia Melendrez
- 24 Katiya Golowatsch
- 24 Amy Blischak
- 26 Ann Garza
- 27 Marty Gala
- 27 Elijah Ferbrache  
Katrina and Joseph Delsante
- 30 Carol Yavornitzky
- 31 Katie Enoch

**Many Years! Многая лета!**

### CONGRATULATIONS



to the newly-illuminated Servant of God Benedict, son of Reno & Melissa Lauro who was Baptized and Chrismated on May 11th. May the Lord grant him, his parents, sponsors and family, many healthy, happy, and blessed years!

### PRAYER LIST

*“I was sick and you visited me.”  
Matt 25:36*

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

- Patricia Starkey
- Jamie Arango
- Ann Garza
- Marilyn Bezkorovainy
- Rose Kurowski
- Anna Michkofsky
- Frank Kulik
- Vickie Kulik

*May Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician of our souls and bodies, reach out his healing hand and bless these, His servants.*

If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Bishop Daniel.

# Bits and Pieces

## JUNE 8-9 ARCHPASTORAL VISIT OF HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN

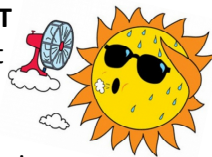
His Eminence Archbishop BENJAMIN will be making an archpastoral visit to our parish the weekend of June 8-9. He will be present for Vespers on Saturday, June 8, and preside at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, June 9. We look forward to welcoming His Eminence, our diocesan bishop and archpastor. Mark your calendars now!

**THANK YOU** to all who made our observance of Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha to be so spiritually rewarding, growth-giving, and joyous. May the Risen Lord grant His light and joy to all who work with such dedication to glorify the Most Holy Trinity through our worship and our community life.

**WELCOME** all visitors to SS Peter and Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening. Please join us in the Cultural Center for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship.

**THE GREAT FEAST OF THE ASCENSION** of the Lord will be celebrated June 5-6, with Vespers on Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. and the Divine Liturgy on Thursday morning, 9:00 a.m.

**SUMMER IS ALMOST HERE!** Despite what the calendar says, summer temperatures are here. As in your own homes, ***please do not prop open doors to the outside*** as this practice just vents the cool air out and the hot air in. Also, please close the doors to all interior rooms when leaving.



**THE MYRRHBEARERS ALTAR SOCIETY (MBAS)** would like to thank everyone who helped with preparations for Palm Sunday and Pascha. Activities included baking rolls, preparing palms and pussy willows, and decorating the church and hall. We also appreciate everyone who brought food for the Wednesday meals after Presanctified Liturgies and for the Pascha potluck after the Vespers service.

The Myrrhbearers meeting and annual luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 19 at the Old Spaghetti Factory, 1418 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

**THE 8TH ANNUAL AZ WALK FOR MISSIONS** was held on Saturday, May 4th at Kiwanis Park. Walkers enjoyed fellowship as faithful from our parish along with St. John the Evangelist, Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Assumption, St. Katherine, Holy Trinity and St. Haralambos came together to raise donations and awareness for missions. OCMC Board of Directors member John Hrapchak spoke as well as Sara Pessimisis (Assumption) about

Alaska, Kenya, Ghana, Albania, India and Mexico. (These posters were shared by Orthodox Christians who live the greater Phoenix area.) His Grace Bishop Daniel opened the event with a prayer and Antonia shared greetings and thank yous from Project



Mexico's Executive Director, Fr. Demetrios Andrews and Fr. Chris Rowe, Development Officer from OCMC.



Project Mexico and St. Innocent's Orphanage. A poster session was presented with pictures of mission work in

Proceeds from the AZ Walk for Missions are split equally between Project Mexico and OCMC. Each donor receives a tax credit receipt. If you missed attending, or didn't get a chance to donate you can still do so! Project Mexico has included a button on their homepage for AZ Walk for Missions Donations which will stay up in May. Visit [ProjectMexico.org](http://ProjectMexico.org) to donate.

# May 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Bright Wednesday Icon "Unexpected Joy"	2 Bright Thursday	3 Bright Friday Ven. Theodosius, Abbot of the Kiev Caves	4 Bright Saturday Starorusskaya Icon
5 ANTIPASCHA St. Thomas Sunday 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Church School</b> <b>FOCA Meeting</b>	6	7 St. Alexis Toth Confessor & Defender of Orthodoxy in North America	8 Holy Apostle John the Theologian	9	10 Apostle Simeon the Zealot	11 SS Cyril & Methodius Apostles to the Slavs  5:00pm Vespers
12 Holy Myrrh- bearing Women 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Church School</b> <b>Happy Mothers' Day</b>	13	14  6:00pm Council Mtg Meeting	15	16	17	18  5:00pm Vespers
19 Paralytic 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Church School</b> <b>MBAS Annual Meeting/Luncheon</b>	20	21 Sts. Constantine and Helen	22 Midfeast Pentecost	23	24	25 3rd Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist  5:00pm Vespers
26 Samaritan Woman 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy	27 <b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>	28	29 Icon "Surety of Sinners"	30	31	1  5:00pm Vespers

Mark your calendars . . .  
JUNE 8-9, 2019  
ARCHPASTORAL VISIT OF HIS EMINENCE  
ARCHBISHOP BENJAMIN

**MBAS Annual Meeting and Luncheon**  
Sunday, May 19  
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