



Sunday Bulletin April 24, 2016 *Greek Orthodox Church of the* *Annunciation*

4121 O'Hara Drive Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: (607) 797-0824 Fax: (607) 797-0824
<http://www.annunciationvestal.ny.goarch.org>

Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos

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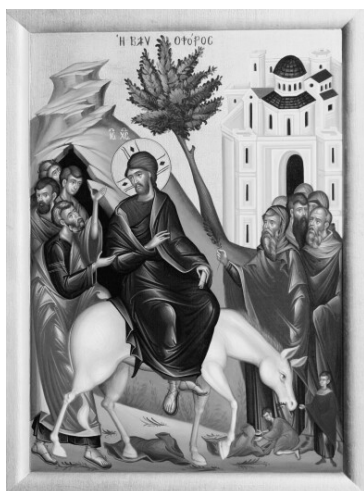
### **Epistle Reading The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9**

BRETHREN, rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

### **Gospel Reading John 12:1-18**

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazaros was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazaros was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me." When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazaros, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazaros also to death, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" And Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it; as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazaros out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

## Palm Sunday



On Sunday, five days before the Passover of the Law, the Lord came from Bethany to Jerusalem. Sending two of His disciples to bring Him a foal of an ass, He sat thereon and entered into the city. When the multitude there heard that Jesus was coming, they straightway took up the branches of palm trees in their hands, and went forth to meet Him. Others spread their garments on the ground, and yet others cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the way that Jesus was to pass; and all of them together, especially the children, went before and after Him, crying out: "Hosanna: Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel" (John 12:13). This is the

radiant and glorious festival of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem that we celebrate today.

The branches of the palm trees symbolize Christ's victory over the devil and death. The word Hosanna means "Save, I pray," or "Save, now." The foal of an ass, and Jesus' sitting thereon, and the fact that this animal was untamed and considered unclean according to the Law, signified the former uncleanness and wildness of the nations, and their subjection thereafter to the holy Law of the Gospel.

### **Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone**

As by baptism we were buried with Thee, O Christ our God, so by Thy Resurrection we were deemed worthy of immortal life; and praising Thee, we cry: Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

### **Seasonal Kontakion in the Plagal of the Second Tone**

In Heaven, He is seated upon a Throne and on earth He rides upon a foal. O Christ our God, accept the praise of the Angels and the hymn of the Children who cry out to You, "Blessed are You who comes to recall Adam.

### **Elizabeth the Wonderworker**

Saint Elizabeth was born in Heraclea of Thrace. She lived in virginity and exhausted herself with ascetical labours and every kind of hardship from the time of her youth, and was deemed worthy of the grace of wonderworking from God; she reposed in peace in Constantinople in the middle of the fifth century.

*Message from Fr. Michael....*

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

Welcome to the beginning of Holy Week 2016. In the Holy Gospel of St. Mark, we read:

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately. They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the Colt? They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Only a few days later, the cheers were replaced with "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" How weak man is! We are to proclaim: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Here is our God that came in the form of a man sitting on the colt of a donkey who came to offer himself for sacrifice for the ransom of the many. The Lord did not come riding on a valiant maverick as a conqueror but instead came humbly to offer Himself as the sacrificial Paschal lamb. The palms offered would soon be replaced with crucifixion nails! This is what man offered the Lord! For even the chieftain of the Apostles, St. Peter, had denied the Lord three times before hearing the rooster crow because of fear and weakness.

We are remorseful for the ignorance of our early ancestral brethren. We now have the knowledge about our Lord that they did not have. The Prince of Peace came and changed the world. God came in the form of man to save us! Hosanna in the highest! God came to let us know that He is very much alive and well. Those who believe that He came have received the message and have been enlightened.

Brothers and sisters, you are invited to come this week and share in the Lord's saving Passion by attending our Holy Week services and taking part in this blessed experience through worship. Come and be a witness for Christ! Come and witness the Holy Passions which will lead us into the triumphant Holy Resurrection of our Lord. Bring your loved ones, your neighbors, and your friends. Everyone is invited to part of this spiritual experience! Wishing you a Kali Anastasi, I remain

Yours in the service of the Passion- filled Christ,

+Fr. Michael

**Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2016**  
**Presiding Priest/Proistamenos: Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis**

**Saturday of Lazaros, April 23rd:** Orthros 9 AM Divine Liturgy 10 AM

(There will be a childrens' breakfast served following the Liturgy and this will be followed by the making of crosses from palms afterwards)

**Palm Sunday, April 24th:** Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy 9:45 AM

**Palm Sunday evening, April 24th:** Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins 6:30 PM

**Holy Monday, April 25th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins 7:30 PM

**Holy Tuesday, April 26th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins and Hymn of Kassiani 7:00 PM

**Holy Wednesday morning, April 27th:** Pre-sanctified Liturgy 9 AM  
(Annunciation Church)

**Holy Wednesday evening, April 27th:** Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction 7:00 PM (Annunciation Church), 3:00 PM (Holy Trinity Church, Binghamton)

**Holy Thursday morning, April 28th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9:00 AM

**Holy Thursday evening, April 28th:** Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord and the 12 Gospels 6:30 PM

**Holy Friday morning, April 29th:** Service of the Royal Hours 9:30 AM

All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service. Fr. Michael will provide written excuses for school absences for those children who spend the day at the church.

Camp Annunciation Holy Friday Program begins with decorating the Epitaphios followed by a light Lenten lunch at 12 noon. All are encouraged to bring and share a dish to pass that conforms with the fast of Holy Friday. A JOY/HOPE meeting will be at 1 PM. All adults and children are invited to attend.

**Holy Friday afternoon, April 29th:** Service of Great Vespers of the Apokathelosis (The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 PM

**Holy Friday evening, April 29th:** Service of the Lamentations matins 6:30 PM

**Holy Saturday morning, April 30th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 10 AM

**Holy Saturday night, April 30th/May 1st:** Matins of the Pascha 11:00 PM

'O Come and Receive Ye the Light...' 11:45 PM

Reading of the Gospel of the Resurrection of our Lord 12 AM midnight  
followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

**Easter Sunday (Pascha), May 1st:** Vespers service of Agape (Annunciation Church)  
(The Gospel will be read in multiple languages. Please see Fr. Michael if you are interested in reading the Gospel in ANY other language besides Greek and English) 11 AM

## **Grecian Festival News**

Our 2016 Grecian Festival will be held June 2-5 this year. We are asking for everyone's help as much assistance is needed to continue our success and support our church. Please see Festival Chairman Steve Anastos to volunteer. As a reminder, please do not purchase any food or supplies for the festival as this is all pre-planned. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the festival chairman. Thank you all for your assistance.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos, Helen Economides, Henry Nussbaum, and Sam Kashou. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

Please join us after the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy today for our annual

# **PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON**

To be held in our fellowship hall. Donation is \$10 for adults, children under 12 are free. All are invited to gather for fellowship as we prepare for our journey into Holy Week 2016 leading up to our Lord's glorious ***anastasi!*** Please join us!!

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296- 9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.