



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

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April 26-28, 2019

Great and Holy Pascha

Pascha Encyclical from His Eminence Metropolitan
Evangelos of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord, Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is risen! Today we have been rescued from the ancient curse of death and new life has been granted to all of humanity. For our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, destroyed the gates of Hades, and has freed us from corruption, thus confirming that He is the Life and the Light of the world. Hades was mortified when it saw Christ, the King of all, and he shuddered in His very presence. Whereas before *“all of creation trembled when it saw you hanging on the tree”*, now all creation rejoices as it witnesses you breaking the gates of hell. To those who have been captives in Hades, they have been freed by Him who liberates all humanity. To those who are dead, they have been raised by Him who is the Source of Life. To those who are in darkness, they have been illumined with Christ’s divine Light. To those who are in anguish, they have been comforted with His sublime presence. To those who are sinful, they have been redeemed by Him who suffered for our sake. All humanity that has gone before us has received a taste of His everlasting Kingdom through His resurrection. The resurrection of Christ not only affects those who have died, but also has significance for those of us who still live. His resurrection is a confirmation that we too will rise at the end of times and will have the opportunity to live with Him in Paradise. We are offered this magnificent gift from Christ through His Cross, but it necessitates that we too carry our cross for our Lord tells us, *“If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me”* (Matthew 16:24). Let us, therefore, run towards Him in our daily lives and *“...set aside all the cares of life”* so ...**(Continued on the back)**

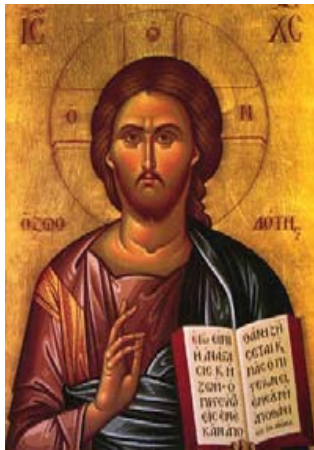


EPISTLE READING:

Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8

In the first book, O Theophilos, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented

himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."



GOSPEL READING:

The Gospel According to John 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

In him was life, and the life was

the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children ...**(Continued on the back)**

UPCOMING EVENTS



The Epitaphio/Altar Fund is collecting donations to decorate our church for Lent, Holy Week and Easter with beautiful floral arrangements. It helps us open our hearts and feel our Lord's Passion and rejoice for His Resurrection. Your donations are much appreciated!



On **May 11th and 19th**, we will hold our first two "**Founders Meetings.**" These drop-in sessions will allow parishioners to share their ideas for our

future home, ask questions, and discuss any other topics. As a "founding member" of our parish and new home, you will also hear the results of our survey, along with updated information from our architect. Stay tuned for more details.



Philoptochos Meeting, May 16th
7pm at Tarbender's Lounge
10 South King Street, Leesburg

Join us for our last meeting before Summer.



Summer Kickoff – early June!

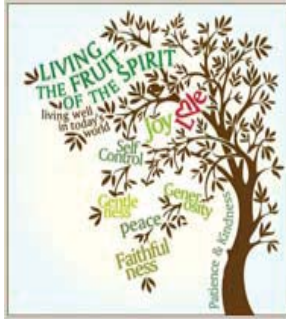
Our parish will be kicking off summer by hosting a celebration at our future home to commemorate the completion

of our purchase. More details to come. We look forward to seeing you there!



Camp Good Shepherd (July 7-13)
Diocese Summer Camp in Hartfield,
VA Campers age 10 (completed 5th grade) through 18 (completed 12th grade) at Camp Piankatank. Register at <http://app.campdoc.com/register/gomnj>

UPCOMING EVENTS



Holy Apostles Vacation Church Camp (VCC) “Fruit of the Spirit”

Registration is now open!

June 17-21; 9:30am-12:30pm

We are really fired up about our summer camp program this year!

Our teachers are working hard to prepare an exciting week of learning and fun at Holy Apostles! Our VCC is a wonderful way to learn about Orthodox Christianity through Lessons, Music, and Crafts. VCC is offered to all students ages 4-12 years. Limited to the first 40 students. Cost is \$45 for 1 child, \$85 for 2 siblings, \$115 for 3 siblings; Discount if you can help Teach! **Registration and T-Shirt Order Deadline is June 2.** Please email Denise Lansdell: deniseinvignia@gmail.com for further details.

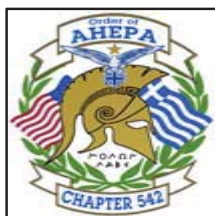


We are buying 7.5 acres of land in Ashburn and we close on June 1st, just 34 DAYS away!

Don't delay! DONATE to our Capital Campaign TODAY! Help us build a permanent church home for you and your family. Be a part of history as a founding member! Go to our website under “Support” and “Capital Campaign” for more details and to donate online.



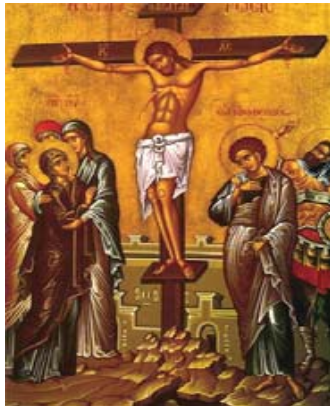
Help needed! If you are going to Agia Skepi Monastery in the month of May, please see Presvytera Joanna to coordinate picking up an order of prosfora for our church. Thank you.



Email info@ahempa542.org or go to ahempa542.org for details on the District and National Scholarships and upcoming AHEPA Sunday.

Icon of the Commemoration of Great and Holy

Friday



On Great and Holy Friday, Orthodox churches display the icon known as the "Axra Tapeinosis - The Extreme Humility." This icon depicts the crucified dead body of Christ upright in the Tomb with the Cross in the background. It combines the two awesome events of Great Friday – the crucifixion and burial of Christ. The Church also has an icon of the Crucifixion of Christ. He is shown nailed to the Cross. His right side is pierced and from the wound flows blood and water. At the foot of the Cross is a skull. (Golgotha, the Mount of the Crucifixion, means "the place of the skull.") Tradition related that the Cross of Christ stood directly over the grave of our Forefather Adam. On the top bar of the Cross is the inscription "I.N.B.I.", the initials for the Greek words meaning "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." To the left of Christ, the Theotokos and St. Mary Magdalene are often pictured as well; the youthful St. John the Beloved Disciple and St. Longinus the Centurion (Mark 15:39) are shown to the right if they are depicted.



Another icon that depicts the events of Holy Friday is known as the Epitaphios Thrinos. In this icon, Christ has been taken off of the Cross, and

His body is being prepared for burial. Shown around the body and mourning His death are His mother, the Theotokos and Virgin Mary, John the beloved disciple, Joseph of Arimathea, and Mary Magdalene. In addition to these icons, Orthodox churches process with and display a large wooden Crucifix with an image of Christ attached. At the Vespers on Friday, the image of Christ is removed from the Cross and wrapped in a white cloth. Another icon, one that depicts the body of Christ removed from the Cross, appears on the Epitaphios that is carried and placed in the Tomb during this service.

(Cover Message Cont.) that, when God calls us to Him, we may partake in the Christ's resurrection; for as St. Paul says, "*For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall surely be united with Him in a resurrection like His*" (Romans 6:5). It is with these thoughts in mind, my dearly beloved in the Lord, that I implore you, as you celebrate Christ's resurrection, the feast of feasts, to also remember all the gifts our Lord has given to us and to continue sharing these gifts with others. The resurrection of Christ is by no means the end of our prayer life or of our charity, rather it is the beginning of a New Day and a New Life. In this new beginning, we have been given spiritual strength in Christ's resurrection. In this new beginning we have been imbued with the Light of Christ so that we too may share it with our friends, our neighbors, and the world. In this new beginning we have been given additional gifts to share our faith and to thereby bring people closer to Christ by living our faith. Let us never cease to do the work our Lord has commanded us so that, when we are called forth to judgment at the Common Resurrection, we may experience the inimitable joy of the Kingdom of God. It is my sincerest hope and prayer that as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ that we spread the good news of His dominion over death to the world. May our Risen Lord bless each and everyone of you and your families with an abundance of renewed faith and health so that we may exclaim with the utmost joy, "*Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death and to those in the tombs he has granted life.*"

With Paternal Love and Blessings in the Risen Christ,
† EVANGELOS Metropolitan of New Jersey

(Gospel Reading Cont.) of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

WEEKLY LITURGICAL SCHEDULE for APRIL
April 29 St. George the Great Martyr Orthros, 8:15
AM. Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM.